

ROBERT KIRKMAN • RYAN OTTLEY • CORY WALKER

INVINCIBLE™

COMPENDIUM TWO



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INVINCIBLE

COMPENDIUM TWO

**ROBERT
KIRKMAN**

writer

**RYAN
OTTLEY**

penciler (issues 48-65,
68-84, 87-96, Invincible
Returns I main story)
inker (issues 48-51, 55,
73, 75, 83, 87, 88)
covers (48-50, 52-65, 68-
84, 87-96)

**CORY
WALKER**

penciler/inker (issues
66-67, 85-86, 92-96,
Invincible Returns
backup story I)
covers (issues 66, 67, 85,
86, 92-96)

**CLIFF
RATHBURN**

inker (issues 52-54,
56-65, 68-84, 87, 89-96,
Invincible Returns I
main story)

RUS WOOTON
letterer

**BILL
CRABTREE**
colorist (issues 48-50)

**FCO
PLASCENCIA**

colorist (issues 51-65,
68-78, 85-86, Invincible
Returns I main story)

DAVE MCCRAIG
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NIKOS KOUTSIS
colorist (issues 79-81)

JOHN RAUCH
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(issues 82-84, 87-96)

**SHEILA
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(issues 75-78)

**IVAN
PLASCENCIA**
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(issue 75)

MIKE TORIS
color assistant
(issue 79-81)

RYAN OTTLEY & JOHN RAUCH
cover

ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN #11

JASON HOWARD
penciler, colorist, cover

CLIFF RATHBURN
inker
RUS WOOTON
letterer

COVERS

JIM LEE
issue 51

DAVID FINCH
Invincible Returns I

INVINCIBLE CREATED BY ROBERT KIRKMAN & CORY WALKER



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Since first breaking in as the writer of his self-published Battle Pope, **ROBERT KIRKMAN** has been a strident proponent of creator-owned comics. Making his home at Image Comics early on, Kirkman is the creator and co-creator of some of the company's most beloved titles, including *Invincible*, *The Walking Dead* and *Super Dinosaur*. Based on the strength of his creator-owned properties, the writer was offered work at Marvel Comics, where he worked on popular characters such as the X-Men and *Fantastic Four*, while launching the fan-favorite *The Irredeemable Ant-Man* and *Destroyer MAX*. More recently, Kirkman has committed himself fully to creator-owned work, continuing his three ongoing titles under his Skybound imprint at Image while also acting as executive producer on *The Walking Dead* television show.

Starting with issue #8, **RYAN OTTLEY** has not only made *Invincible* his home, but he has made it his own as well. For years, the artist has joined forces with Robert Kirkman in detailing the ongoing adventures of young Mark Grayson. Not only is Ottley a talented storyteller, but he also boasts an unparalleled work ethic. His speed made it possible for him to draw a guest spot on DC Comics' *Superman/Batman* as well as launch the new ongoing series *Haunt*, while remaining *Invincible*'s regular artist for over ninety issues and counting.

The co-creator of *Invincible*, **CORY WALKER** was also the series' original artist, drawing issues #1-7 and setting the tone for the title. Since then, the talented artist has performed art duties on numerous titles at both Marvel and DC Comics, including issues of *Marvel Team-Up*, *The Irredeemable Ant-Man*, *Punisher War Journal*, and *Shadowpact* in addition to acting as sole artist on the critically acclaimed *Destroyer MAX*, alongside writer and *Invincible* co-creator Robert Kirkman. Walker has never forgotten his creation however, and has contributed frequent guest spots on *Invincible* issues, covers and back-ups.

The Mexico-based artist **FCO PLASCENCIA** began his professional coloring career on *Gemini* from Image Comics, before his extended runs on *Invincible*, *Astounding Wolf-Man* and *Haunt*. He currently colors DC Comic's bestselling *Batman*.

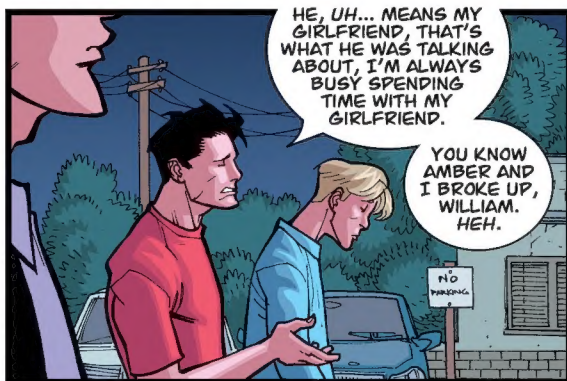
JOHN RAUCH is an American comic book colorist whose credits include *Invincible*, *The Darkness*, *Teen Titans: Year One*, *Patsy Walker: Hellcat*, and a bunch of other stuff not worth bragging about. He enjoys speaking about himself in the third person and pretending he is more talented and relevant than he really is in order to help fight off bouts of depression.

Anyone who looks at the credits of their favorite comic books is likely familiar with the name **RUS WOOTON**. With his work on *Invincible*, *The Walking Dead*, *Super Dinosaur*, *The Manhattan Projects*, *Sex and more*, a case could easily be made for Wooton being the go-to letterer for creator-owned comics. But Wooton's work can also be found in abundance at Marvel Comics, where as a member of Chris Eliopoulos' Virtual Caligraphy group he has lettered countless series including *Fantastic Four*, *newuniversal*, *Uncanny X-Men* and more.

SEAN MACKIEWICZ is the Editorial Director of Skybound Entertainment. Choosing his favorite title to work on is like picking your favorite child...if all your children were covered in blood.

CHAPTER 48





HEY--WAIT
A MINUTE.
DID WE SAY
SOMETHING?

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?

I'M
JUST--
OH,
GOD...



I KNOW
YOU GUYS DON'T
KNOW EVERYTHING
THAT HAPPENED TO
ME WHEN THAT
PSYCHO ABDUCTED
ME--YOU HAD TO
SEE SOME OF IT
ON THE NEWS
BUT--

THE THINGS
HE DID TO ME, WHAT
HE TURNED ME INTO--
I ONLY REMEMBER
SOME OF IT, BUT HE
CHANGED ME... I--
I'M BARELY EVEN
HUMAN
ANYMORE.

I KNOW YOU
GUYS CAN'T TELL,
IT'S ON THE INSIDE--
YOU CAN'T SEE IT,
BUT I CAN FEEL IT...
I KNOW IT'S--I
CAN'T SLEEP...
I HAVE
NIGHTMARES.

I'M SORRY,
GUYS--I JUST--
I WASN'T
READY FOR
THIS.

I'M
SORRY.

SO...

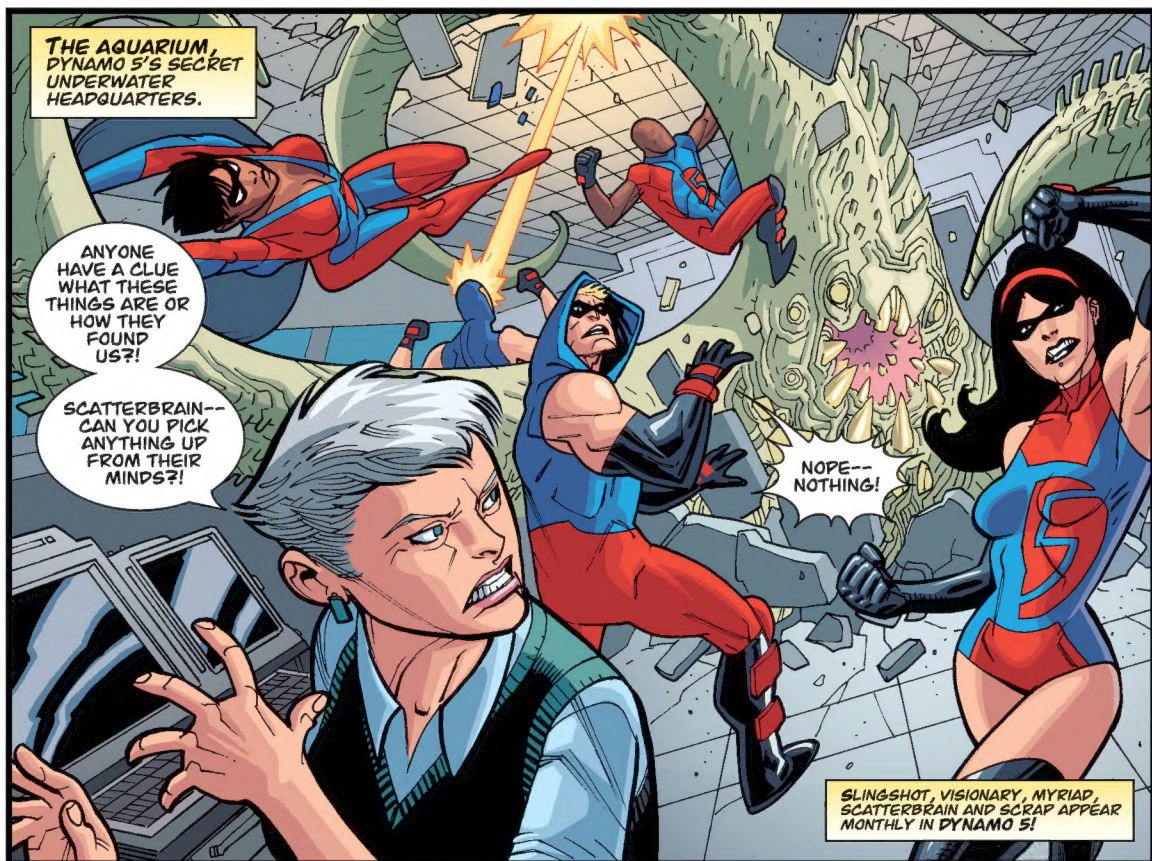
THAT WAS
OUR RIDE...
YOU THINK
MAYBE...?

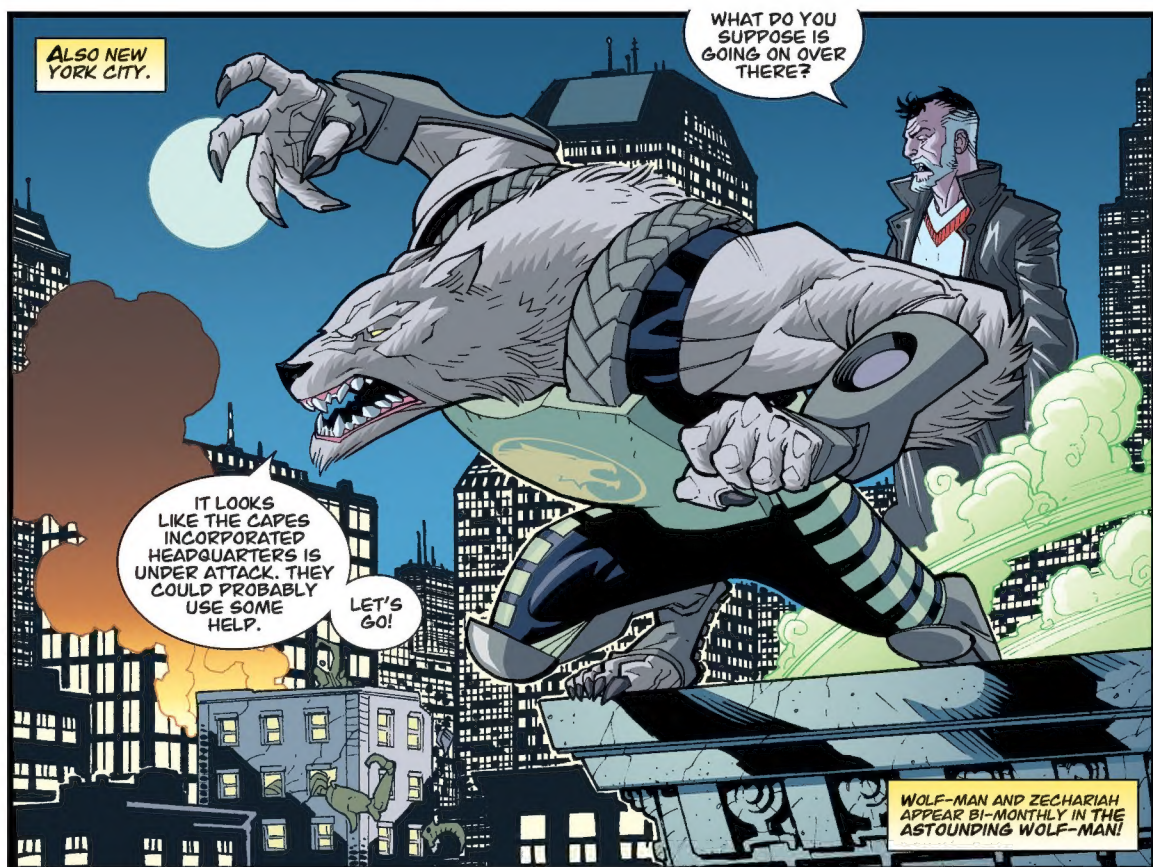
HUH?

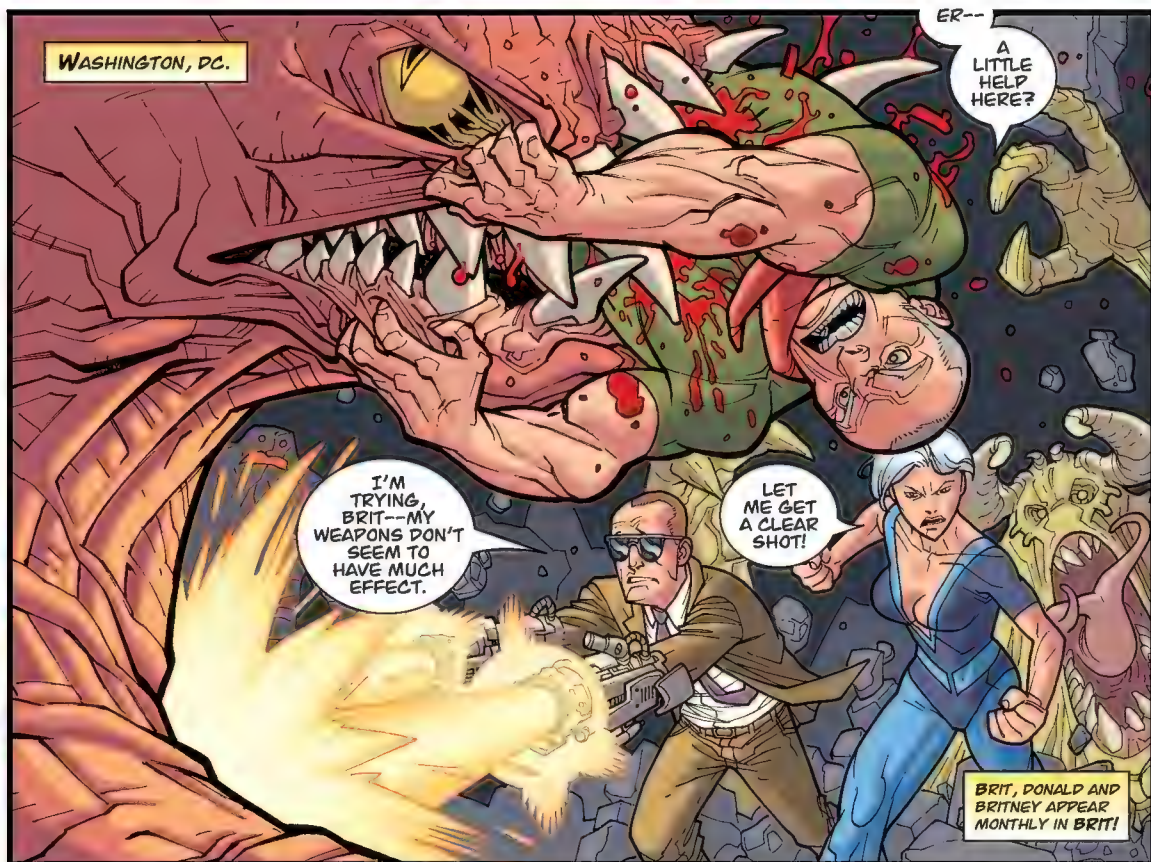
NO. NO
WAY.
YOU CAN
WALK.

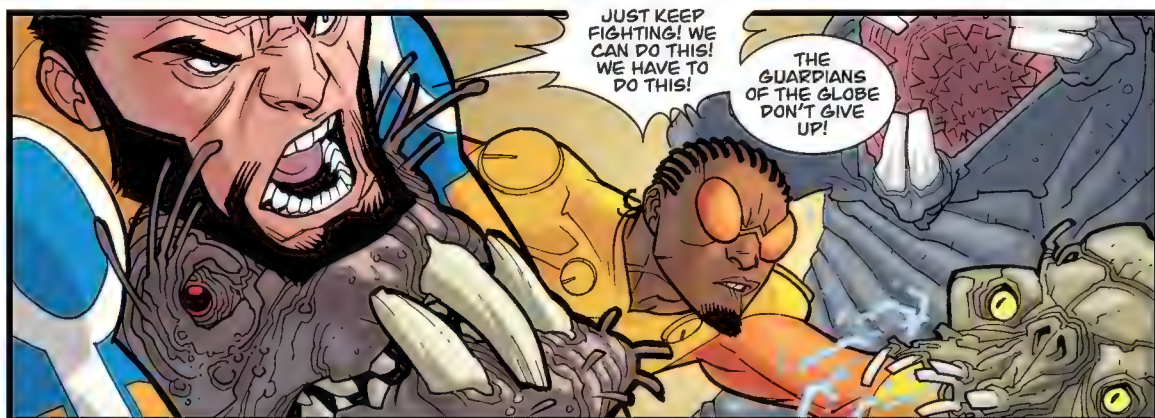
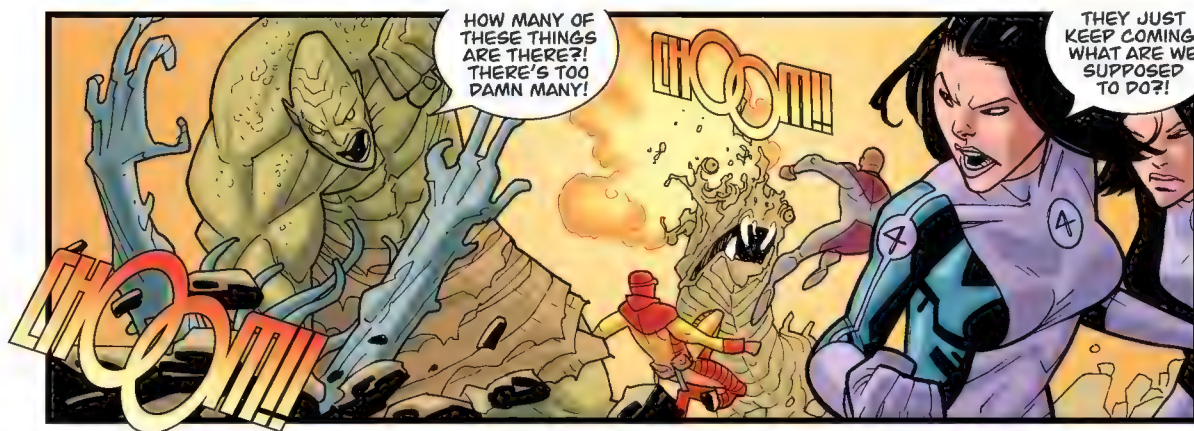
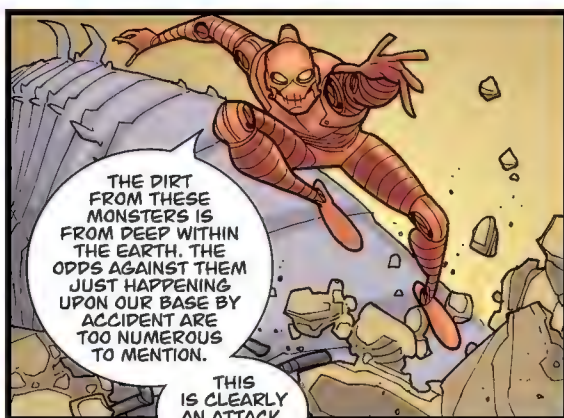
I'VE GOT
SOMETHING
I NEED TO DO,
ANYWAY...
SOMETHING
I'VE BEEN
PUTTING OFF.

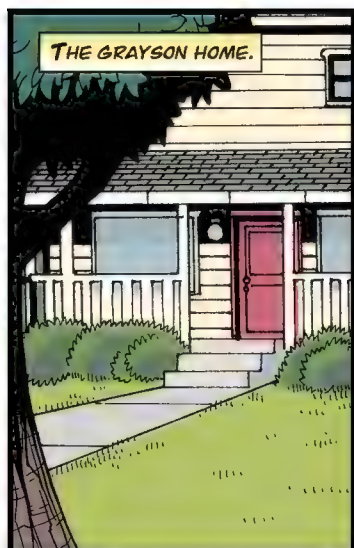


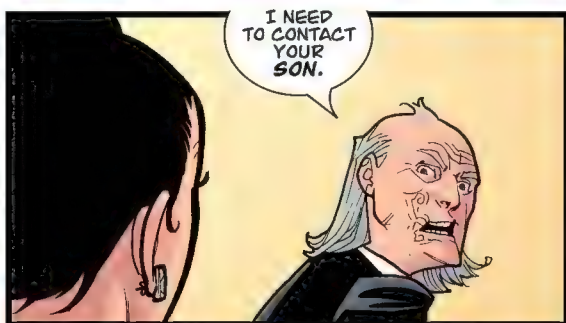
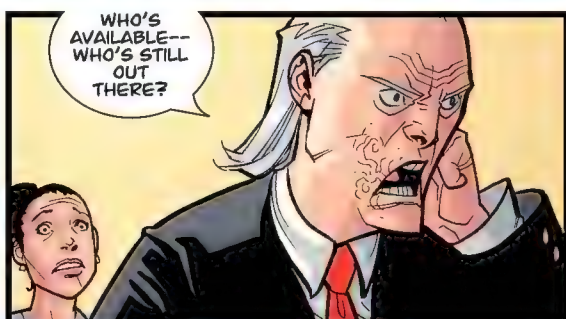
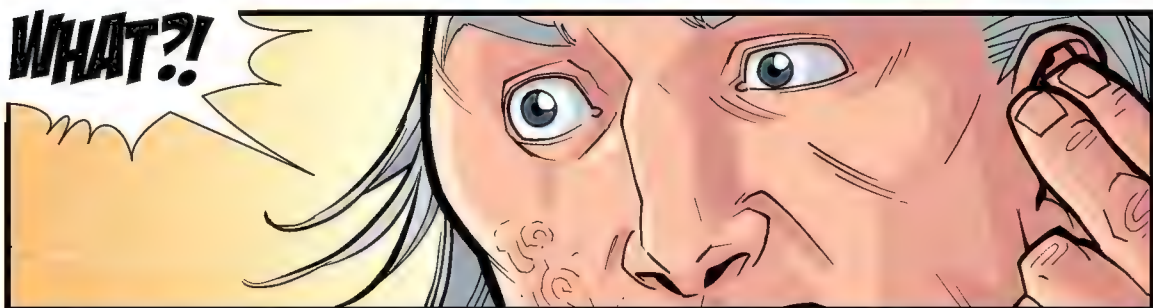












AFRICA.

DO YOU
KNOW HOW
HARD IT WAS
FOR ME TO
FIND YOU?

NOT HARD
ENOUGH.





WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?



YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THAT MEANS. I'M NOT IN THE MOOD, I'M KIND OF BUSY, AND I REALLY DON'T THINK I'M READY TO TALK TO YOU JUST YET.

EVE, CAN WE JUST GO SOMEWHERE SO WE CAN TA--

MARK, LISTEN UP.

UGH.

HOLD ON.

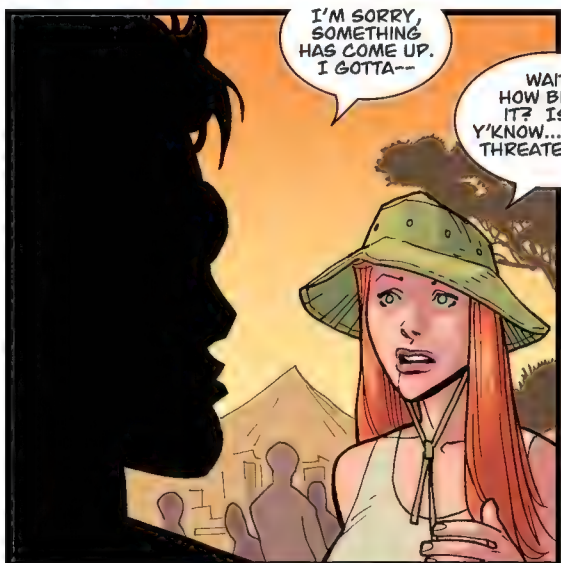
I KNOW YOU'RE NOT TALKING TO ME, SO HERE'S THE DEAL. IT SEEMS EVERY SUPERHERO WITH A CENTRAL BASE--AND SOME WHO DON'T--HAVE BEEN TAKEN OUT. THEY'RE JUST GONE.

WE'RE STILL WORKING OUT ALL THE DETAILS, BUT I NEED YOU IN THE STATES, NOW. I'LL GIVE YOU MORE DETAILS EN ROUTE--GET A MOVE ON.



I'M SORRY, SOMETHING HAS COME UP. I GOTTA--

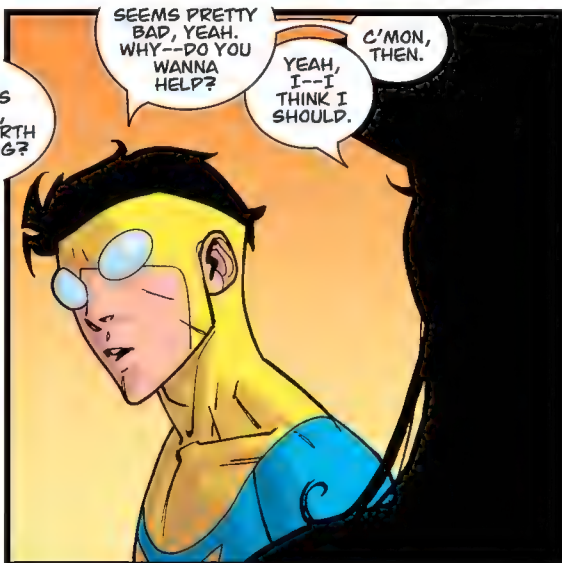
WAIT, HOW BIG IS IT? IS IT, Y'KNOW... EARTH THREATENING?

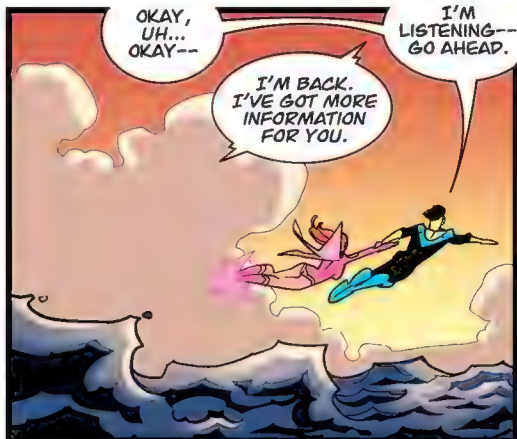
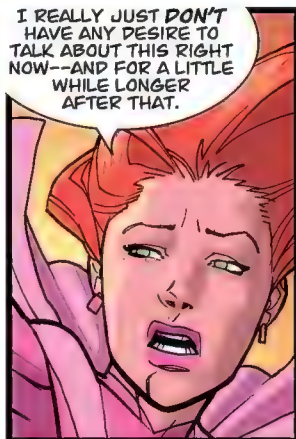


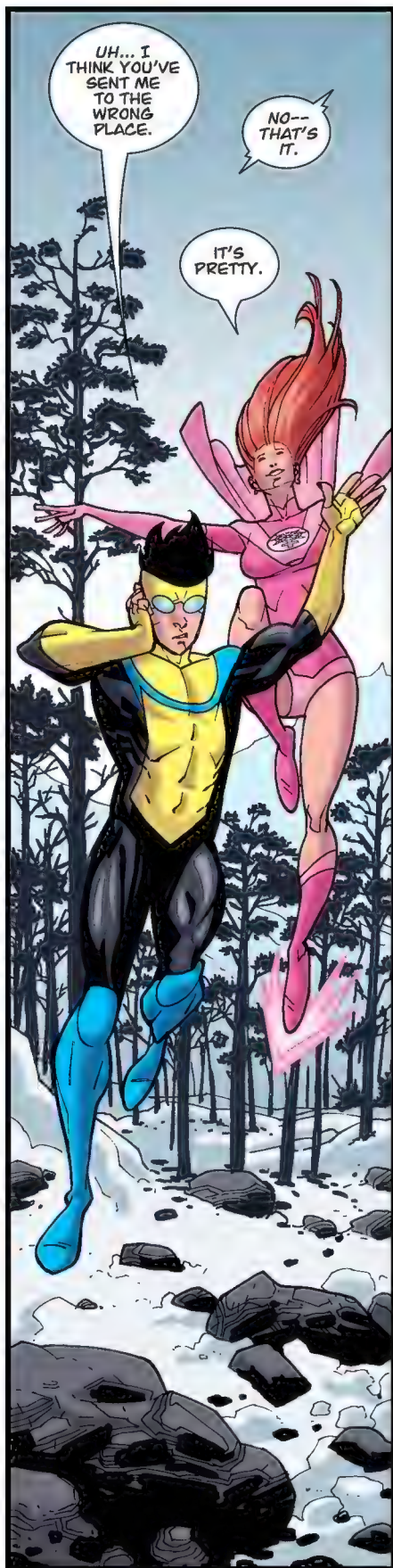
SEEMS PRETTY BAD, YEAH. WHY--DO YOU WANNA HELP?

YEAH, I--I THINK I SHOULD.

C'MON, THEN.







UH... I
THINK YOU'VE
SENT ME
TO THE
WRONG
PLACE.

NO--
THAT'S
IT.

IT'S
PRETTY.



I'M TELLING YOU--
UNLESS CHIPMUNKS
ABDUCTED THE
REST OF THE WORLD'S
SUPERHEROES--
WE'RE AT THE
WRONG PLACE.



NO, YOU'RE THERE.
SORRY, THE TRACKERS
THE CAPES EMPLOYEES
ARE GIVEN ARE A BIT
OUT-DATED. ROBOT JUST
CONTACTED ME, THEY
ONLY GOT HIS ROBOT
BODY--HE'S SAFE.
HE'S GOT MORE
PRECISE TRACKING
ABILITIES.

THEY'RE
THREE MILES
DOWN.



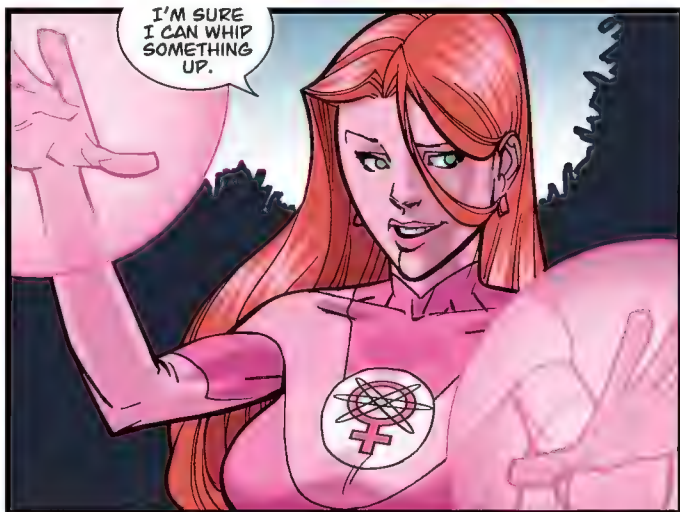
OH,
GREAT.

THEY'RE
THREE MILES
UNDER-
GROUND.

OH...
FUN.



GOT ANY
SUGGESTIONS
FOR DIGGING?



I'M SURE
I CAN WHIP
SOMETHING
UP.



YOU'RE NOT LAUGHING NOW, ARE YOU?!

ARE YOU?!

IT IS YOU WHO LOOK LIKE FOOLS, THIS TIME! IT IS YOU WHO IS LAUGHED AT!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

I'M JUST--I'M BLOWN AWAY BY HOW EASY ALL THIS WAS. ONCE I REALIZED I COULD STILL SPEAK TO THE LEGIONS OF UNDEREARTH--MY PEOPLE... IT ALL CAME TOGETHER.

I KNEW THAT SOME OF YOU WOULD BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD-- BUT REALLY, THIS STEP OF THE PLAN WAS ONLY MEANT TO THIN YOU OUT!

FOR CREATURES THAT TRAVEL THE CORE OF THE EARTH, COMMUNICATING WITH LITTLE MORE THAN VIBRATION--FINDING YOUR SECRET STRONGHOLDS AND SANCTUARIES WAS CHILD'S PLAY!

I DIDN'T EXPECT TO GET ALL OF YOU!!

ARROGANT JERK!

WE'LL SEE HOW CONFIDENT YOU ARE AFTER--

FLOOM!

IRK!

ACTUALLY-- I MIGHT HAVE A BETTER IDEA TO-- UNGH!

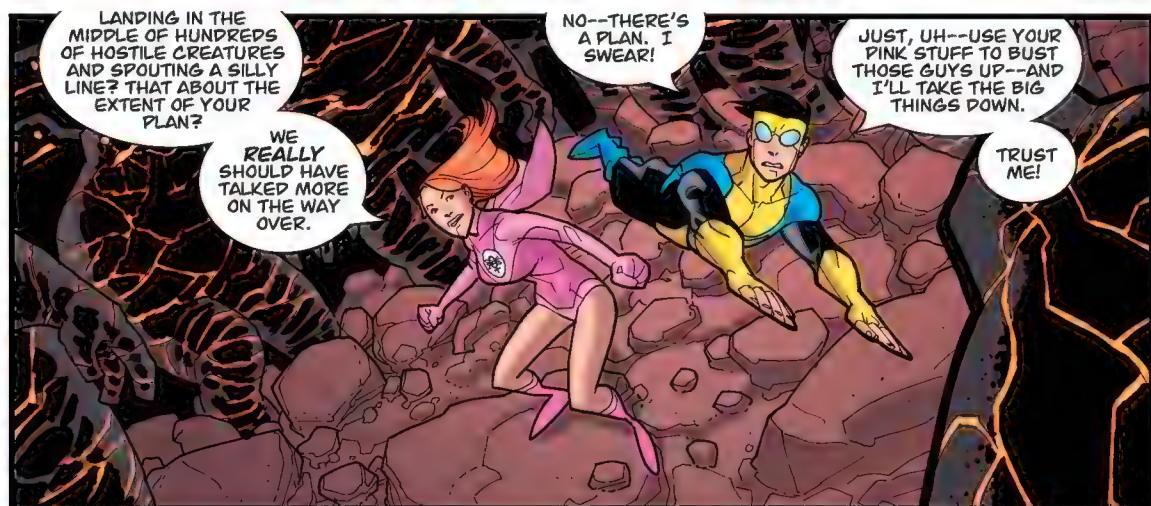
I WOULDN'T HOLD OUT MUCH HOPE FOR ESCAPE IF I WERE YOU. THE SUBSTANCE YOU ARE IN IS VERY STRONG--VERY, VERY STRONG.

TRUE, SOME OF YOU COULD PROBABLY BURST THROUGH--BUT NOT WITHOUT CRUSHING THE PEOPLE ALSO CONTAINED WITHIN YOUR INDIVIDUAL GLOBES.

SO TAKE THAT INTO CONSIDERATION.

SO ESCAPE-- NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE. AND WE'RE MANY MILES BELOW EARTH'S SURFACE--SO THE CHANCES OF A RESCUE ARE--

LET ME JUST SAY I HAVE YOU ALL RIGHT WHERE I WANT YOU.



INVINCIBLE!



IF YOU GO INTO MIST FORM--I THINK I CAN GET US OUT OF HERE!



I'M GOING TO WEAR YOUR SKIN AS A TROPHY!



YOU KNOW, SEISMIC... I SEEM TO RECALL YOU PACKING A BIT MORE PUNCH THAN THAT--MAYBE IT'S JUST ME.



I WASN'T TRYING TO HURT YOU--I WAS JUST MAKING A CALL.







OKAY--DON'T LET THESE THINGS INTIMIDATE US! I CAN DO SOME DAMAGE REAL QUICK.

THE BIGGER THEY ARE THE HARDER THEY--



THUD-THUD!

GAK!

I GOT YOU!



FASTER THAN I--

IT'S OKAY-- JUST REST. I'LL GET YOU SOMEWHERE SAFE AND THEN I'LL--



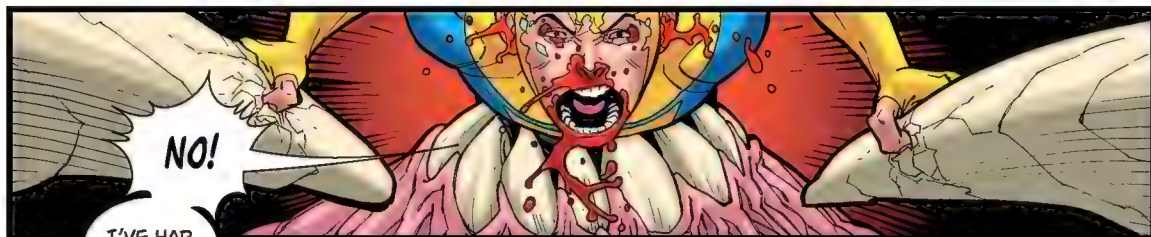
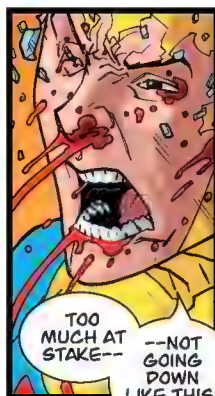
EVE!

THUD!



I'VE GOT HER, HERO-- YOU JUST DO YOUR THING.



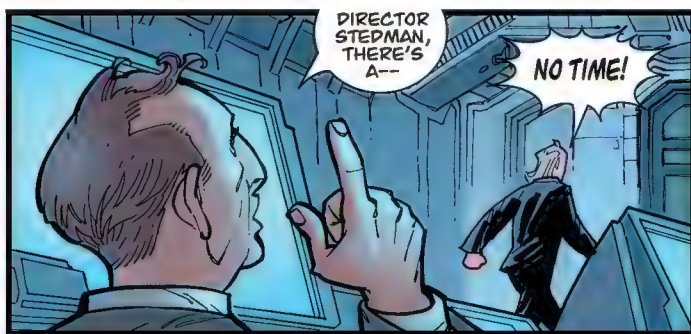
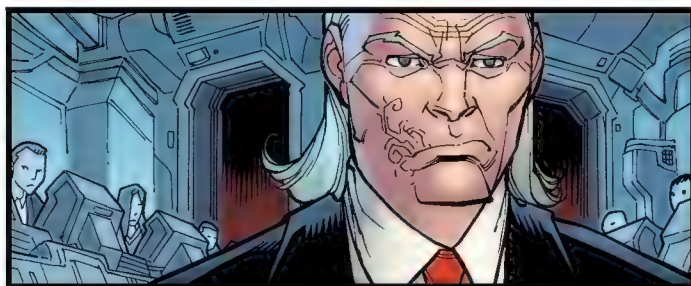
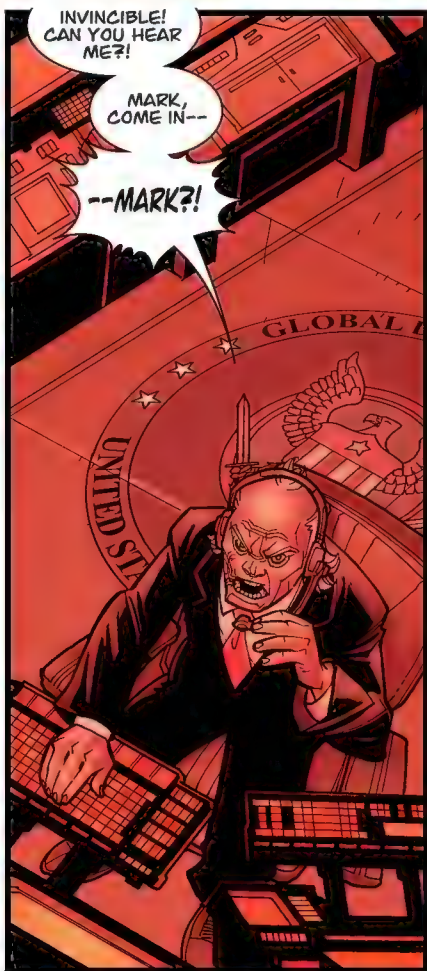
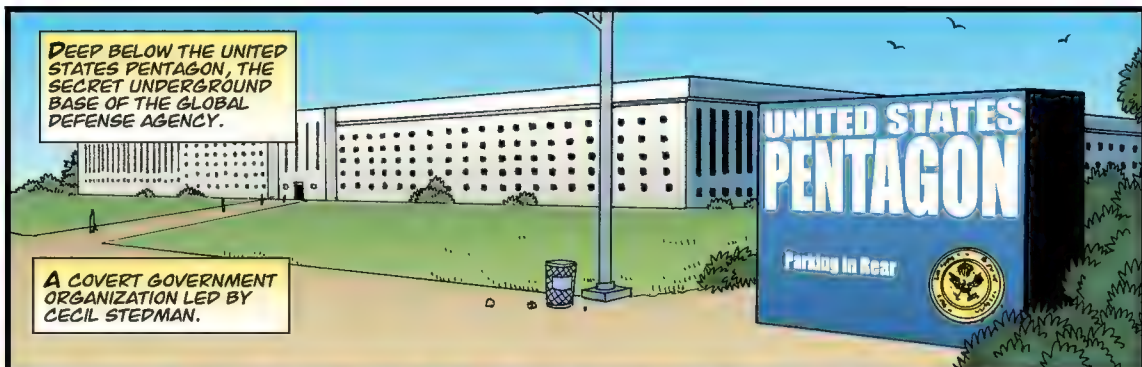


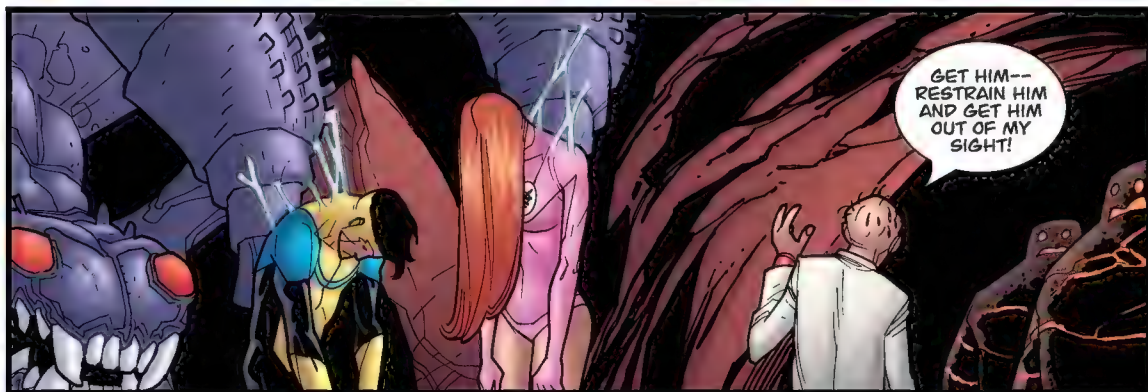
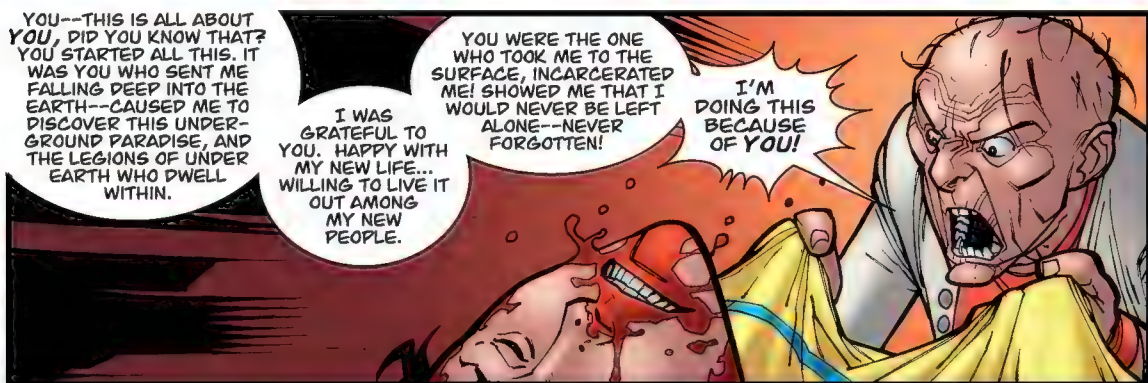




CHAPTER 49

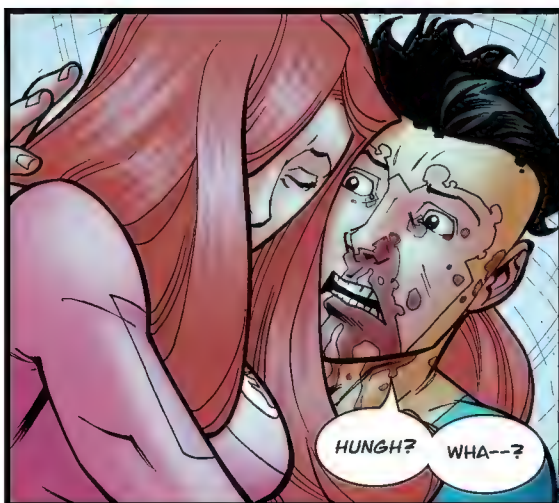




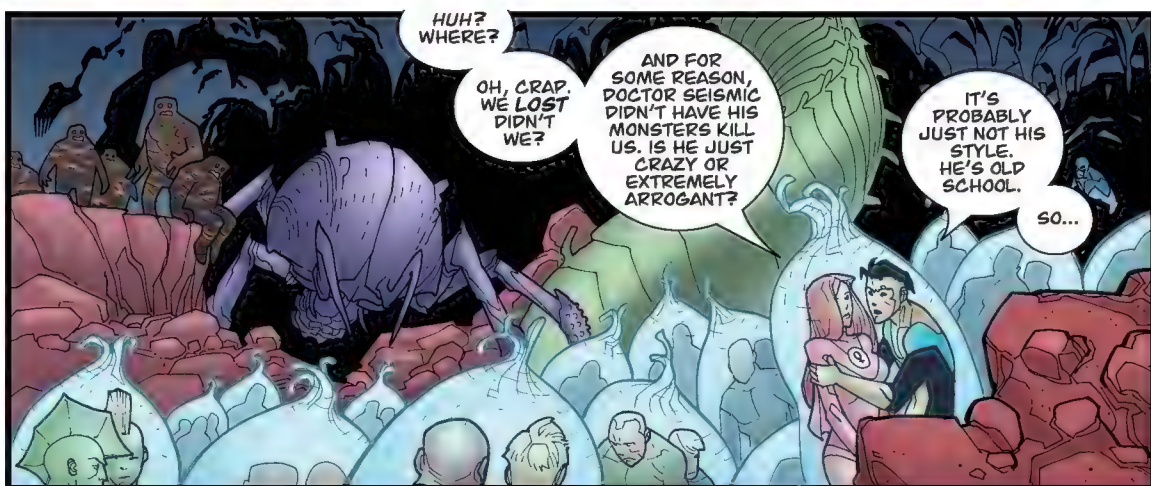




UNGH...



HUNGH? WHA--?



HUH?
WHERE?

OH, CRAP.
WE LOST
DIDN'T WE?

AND FOR
SOME REASON,
DOCTOR SEISMIC
DIDN'T HAVE HIS
MONSTERS KILL
US. IS HE JUST
CRAZY OR
EXTREMELY
ARROGANT?

IT'S
PROBABLY
JUST NOT HIS
STYLE.
HE'S OLD
SCHOOL.

SO...



JUST GIVE ME
A MINUTE AND
I'LL HAVE
US OUT OF
HERE.

NO.
WAIT.

WE GET
OUT OF HERE--
THEN WHAT? IT'LL
BE JUST LIKE
BEFORE--WE'LL BE
OVERPOWERED LIKE
BEFORE AND THEN
HE MIGHT PUT US
IN SOMETHING
STRONGER.

WE'VE
GOT TO
THINK
ABOUT
THIS.

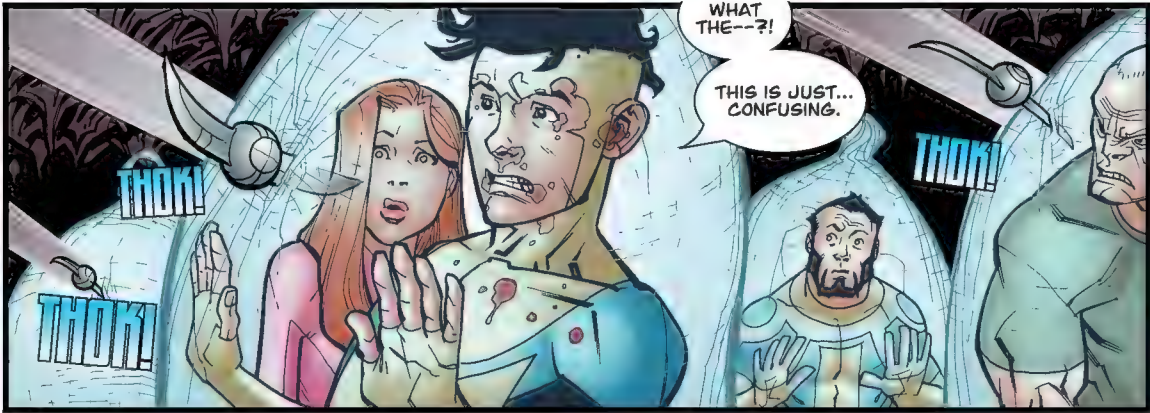


WE'RE
SURROUNDED
BY THE MOST
POWERFUL
SUPERHEROES ON
THE PLANET--I MEAN,
THIS ISN'T EVERYONE,
BUT IT'S CLOSE--I
THINK I'VE GOT
AN IDEA.

WE NEED
TO FOCUS
ON FREEING
EVERYONE--IGNORE
THE MONSTERS,
DON'T TRY TO
DEFEAT THEM
OURSELVES.

WE GET
EVERYONE
OUT--AND
THEN FIGHT
AS A GROUP,
WE'LL--







TOO SLOW!



OKAY--NOW THINGS ARE FUN AGAIN!

WROKK!

BE CAREFUL, ANGEL--THIS ISN'T A GAME!



JUST STEP AWAY--AND DUCK.

THINK!

OH, UH... RIGHT.

THANKS.



BOOM!

CRAP!

CRAP!



NO! NOT THIS EASY!

YOU DON'T GET TO WIN THIS EASY!



IT'S NOT EASY!

I JUST MAKE IT LOOK THAT WAY.



WROOOOM!!!



THERE'S STILL SOME FIGHT LEFT IN THIS OLD DOG! BUT I'M NO FOOL--I CAN SEE THE WRITING ON THE WALL.

MAYBE THIS IS IT-- MAYBE IT'S ALL BUT OVER. BY WORKING TOGETHER, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO DEFEAT MY LEGIONS OF UNDER-EARTH!

BUT IF THIS IS IT, IF I'M GOING DOWN--I'M TAKING EVERY ONE OF YOU WITH ME!

I DON'T THINK SO.

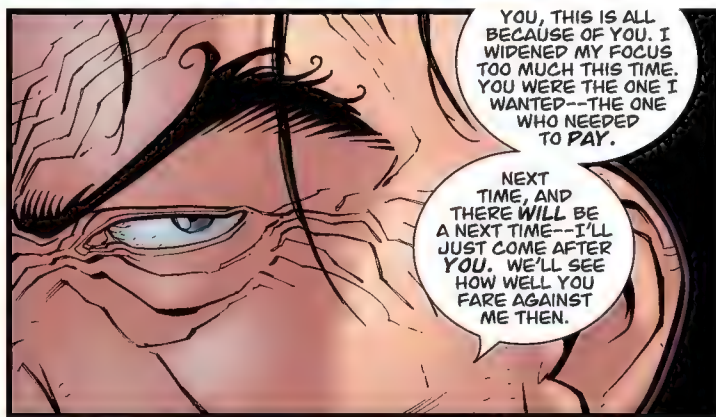


YOU!

YOU THINK YOU'RE FAST ENOUGH TO STOP ME BEFORE I BRING THIS CAVE DOWN ON EVERYONE?



I AM-- AND YOU KNOW I AM.



YOU, THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF YOU. I WIDENED MY FOCUS TOO MUCH THIS TIME. YOU WERE THE ONE I WANTED--THE ONE WHO NEEDED TO PAY.

NEXT TIME, AND THERE WILL BE A NEXT TIME--I'LL JUST COME AFTER YOU. WE'LL SEE HOW WELL YOU FARE AGAINST ME THEN.

OLD MAN, ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME PUNCH YOU?



I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU TRY.









STAND DOWN,
INVINCIBLE!

RIGHT
NOW!



HE--HE
MURDERED PEOPLE.
HE WAS A COLD-
BLOODED KILLER.
WHY DOESN'T
ANYONE KNOW
ABOUT THIS?



I HAVE KNOWN
DARKWING FOR
SOME TIME, BACK
IN HIS DAYS AS
NIGHT BOY WHEN
HE WORKED WITH
THE ORIGINAL
DARKWING.

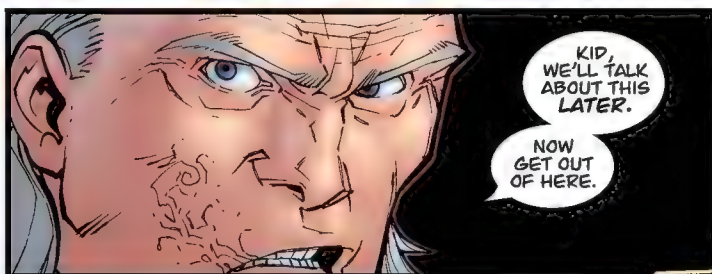
ARROGANT,
YES--BUT
NEVER A
KILLER.



I WAS THERE--I
SAW HIM. WASN'T
THIS ALL OVER THE
NEWS? I THOUGHT
EVERYONE KNEW
ABOUT THIS.

WE'LL
TALK ABOUT
THIS
LATER.

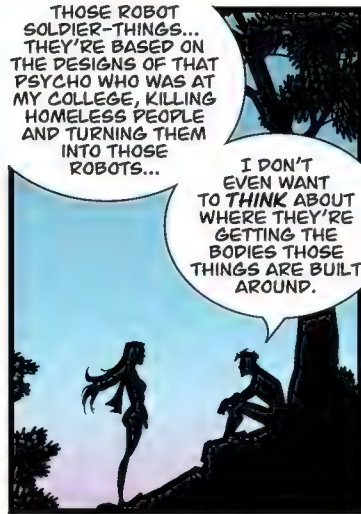
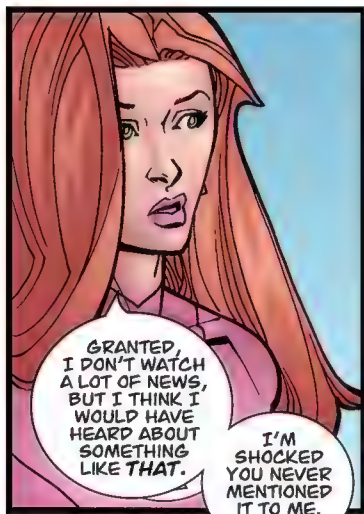
BUT--



KID,
WE'LL TALK
ABOUT THIS
LATER.

NOW
GET OUT
OF HERE.





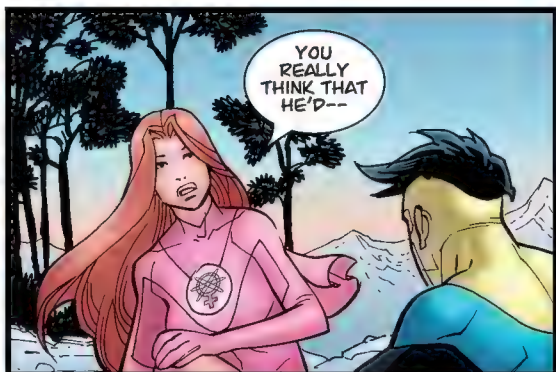
IF THE NEWS HAD BROADCAST ANYTHING ABOUT PARKWING, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE ONLY ONE TO ATTACK ONCE THOSE MONSTERS WERE DEFEATED.

THERE WAS A COVER UP--THE NEWS NEVER WENT PUBLIC.

CECIL STEPMAN HEADS UP THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY--THEY CAN DO ANYTHING IN THE NAME OF "GLOBAL DEFENSE."

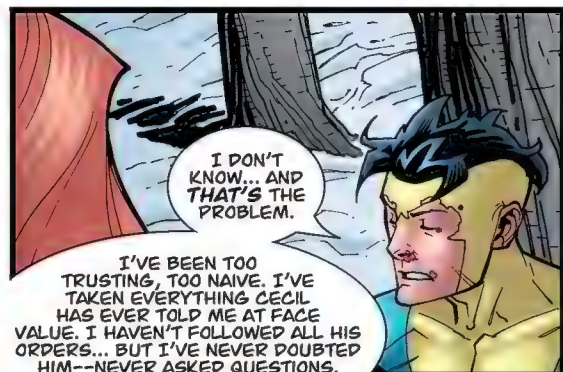


YOU REALLY THINK THAT HE'D--



I DON'T KNOW... AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

I'VE BEEN TOO TRUSTING, TOO NAIVE. I'VE TAKEN EVERYTHING CECIL HAS EVER TOLD ME AT FACE VALUE. I HAVEN'T FOLLOWED ALL HIS ORDERS... BUT I'VE NEVER DOUBTED HIM--NEVER ASKED QUESTIONS.



CAN YOU GET YOURSELF BACK HOME?

YEAH, SURE.

AND LATER-- AFTER I'M DONE, I WANT TO COME VISIT--CLEAR THINGS UP BETWEEN US. I DON'T LIKE THIS... TENSION.

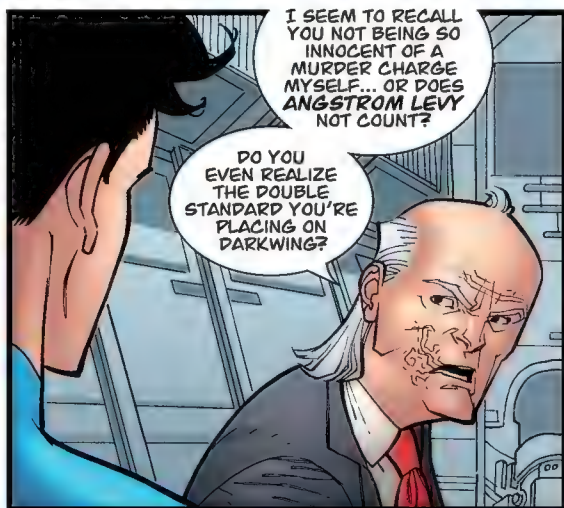
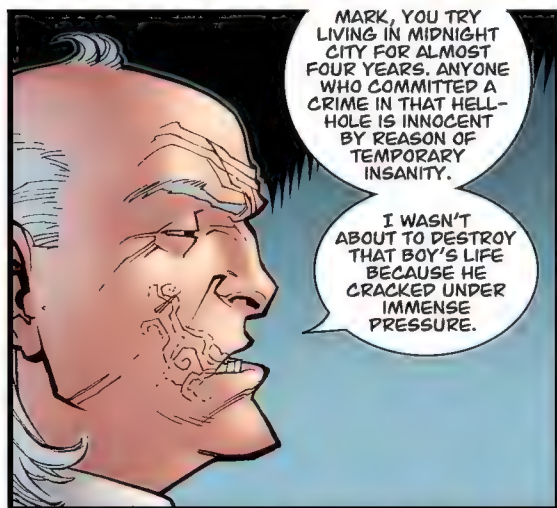
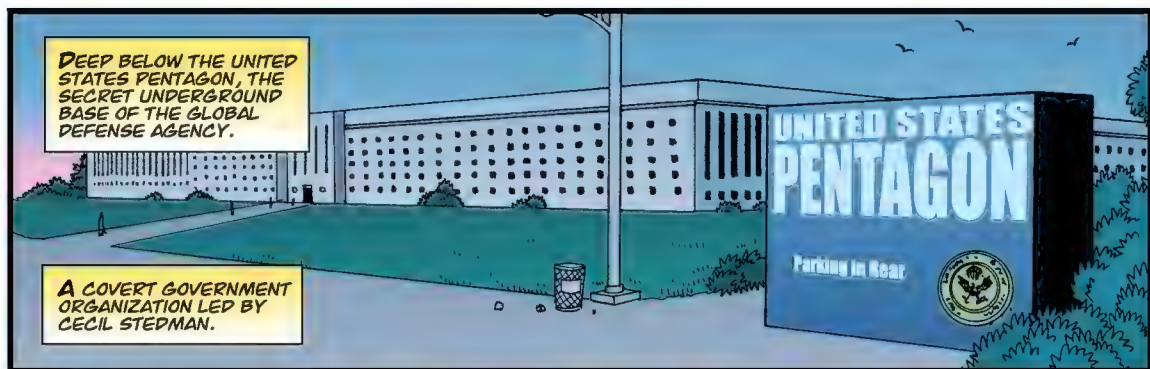
I'D UH, I'D LIKE THAT, MARK. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW?

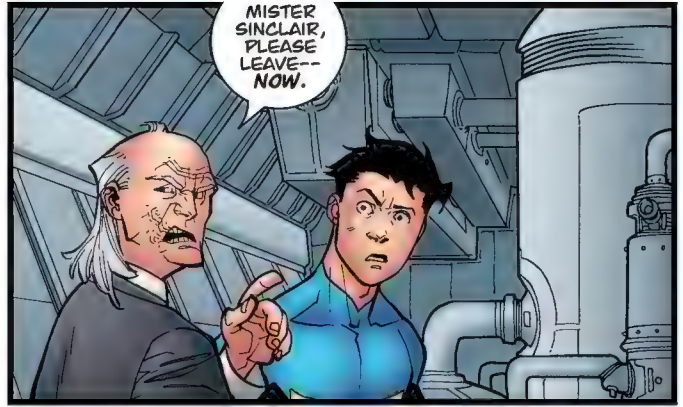


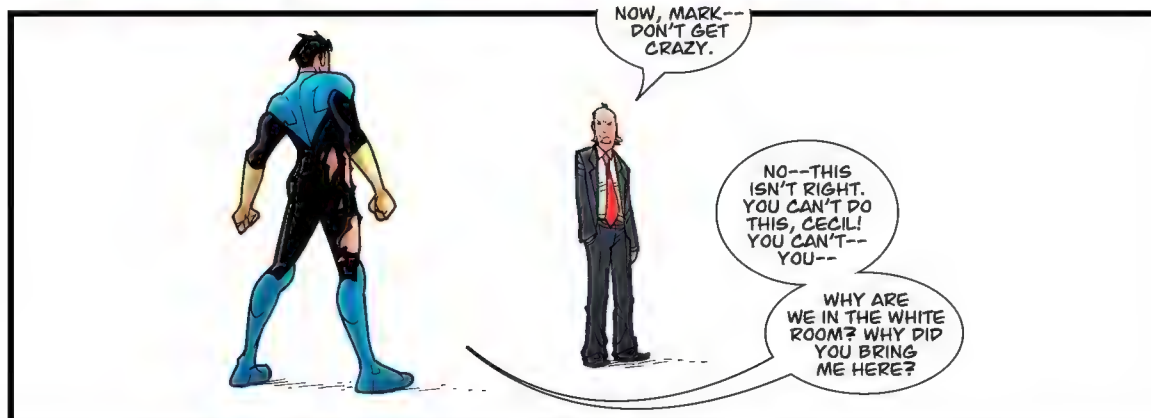
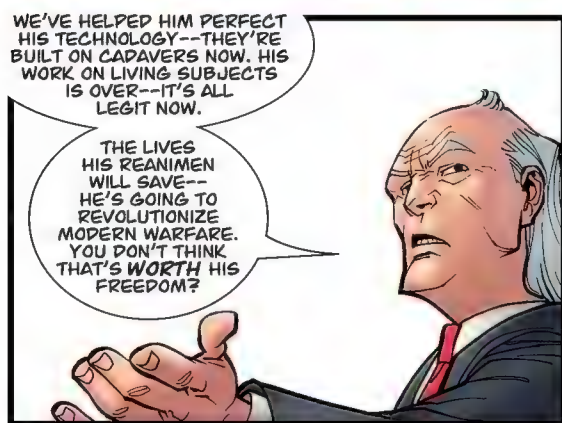
ASK SOME OF THOSE QUESTIONS...

...WHETHER I WANT TO KNOW THE ANSWERS OR NOT.









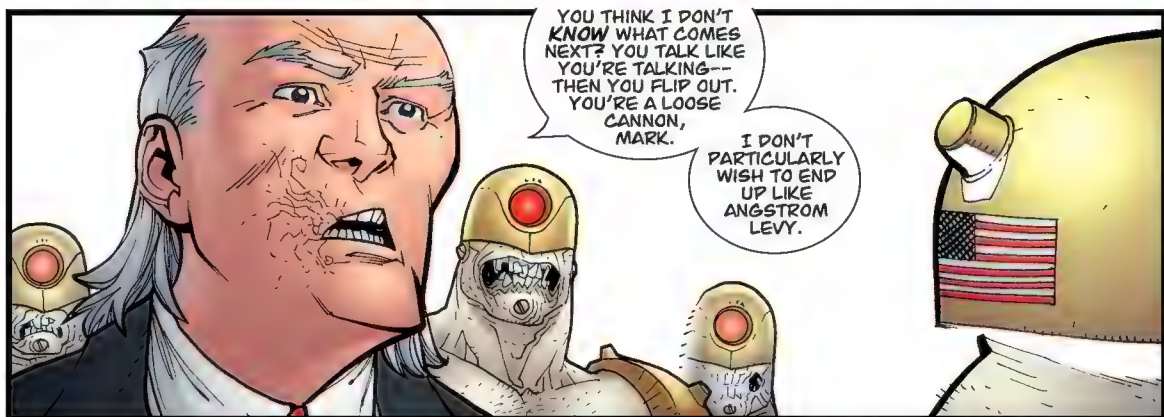
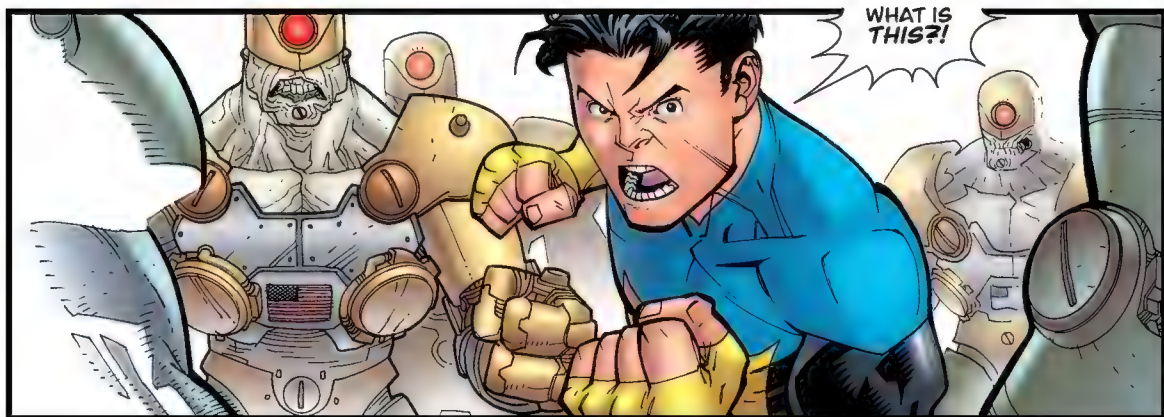
FOR THE
ELEMENT OF
SURPRISE.

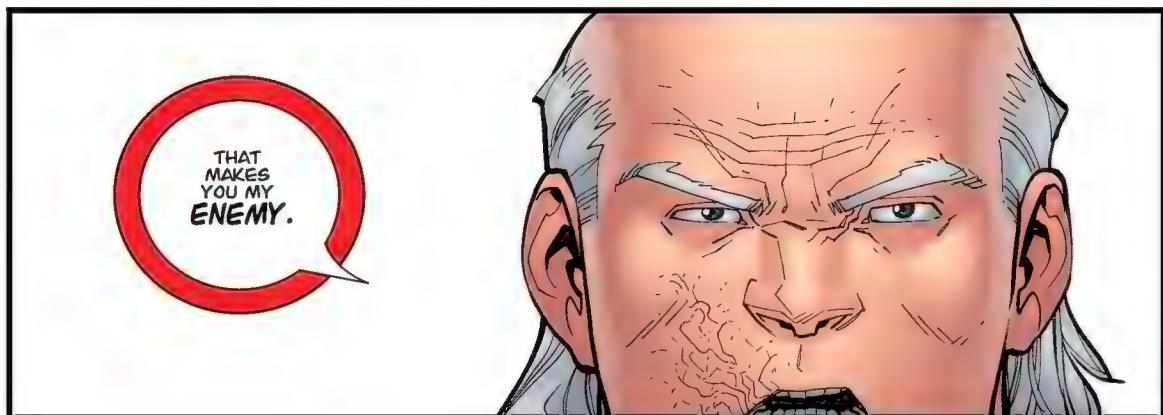
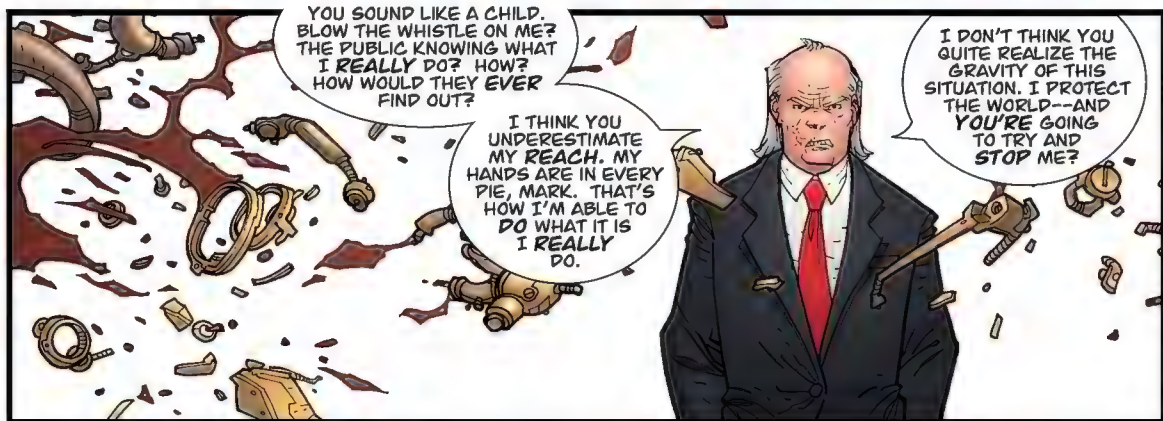
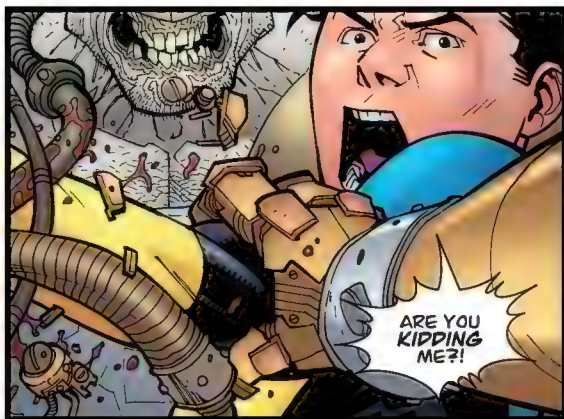




CHARACTER 50







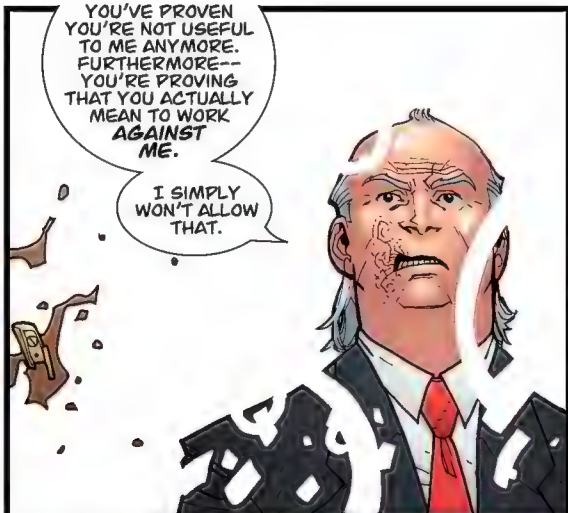
WHAT--I HAVEN'T
KILLED ENOUGH
PEOPLE TO BE
AN ALLY?!



YOU'RE
INSANE!

YOU'VE PROVEN
YOU'RE NOT USEFUL
TO ME ANYMORE.
FURTHERMORE--
YOU'RE PROVING
THAT YOU ACTUALLY
MEAN TO WORK
AGAINST
ME.

I SIMPLY
WON'T ALLOW
THAT.

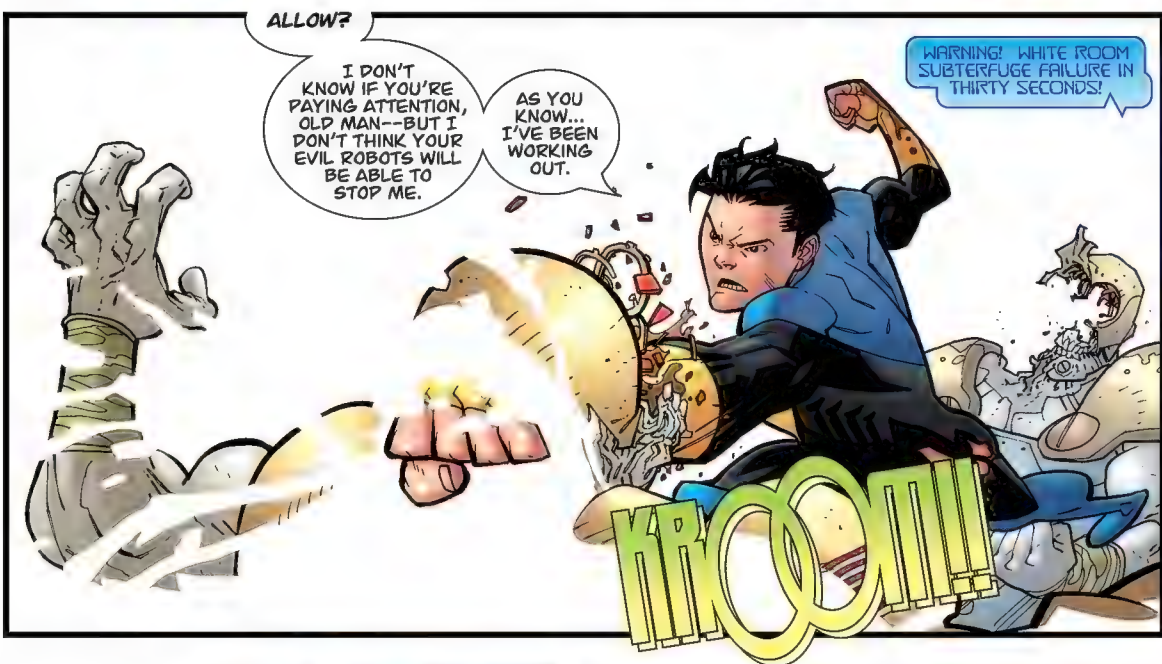


ALLOW?

I DON'T
KNOW IF YOU'RE
PAYING ATTENTION,
OLD MAN--BUT I
DON'T THINK YOUR
EVIL ROBOTS WILL
BE ABLE TO
STOP ME.

AS YOU
KNOW...
I'VE BEEN
WORKING
OUT.

WARNING! WHITE ROOM
SUBTERFUGE FAILURE IN
THIRTY SECONDS!



CRAP.

WARNING! WHITE ROOM
SUBTERFUGE FAILURE IN
FIFTEEN SECONDS!



SO THAT'S IT? IS
THAT ALL OF YOUR
ROBOTS? YOU REALLY
DIDN'T PLAN FOR
THIS DID YOU?

DID YOU
THINK I'D JUST
GIVE UP AND
STEP BACK
IN LINE?

WHITE ROOM
SUBTERFUGE
FAILURE IN THREE...
TWO... ONE...





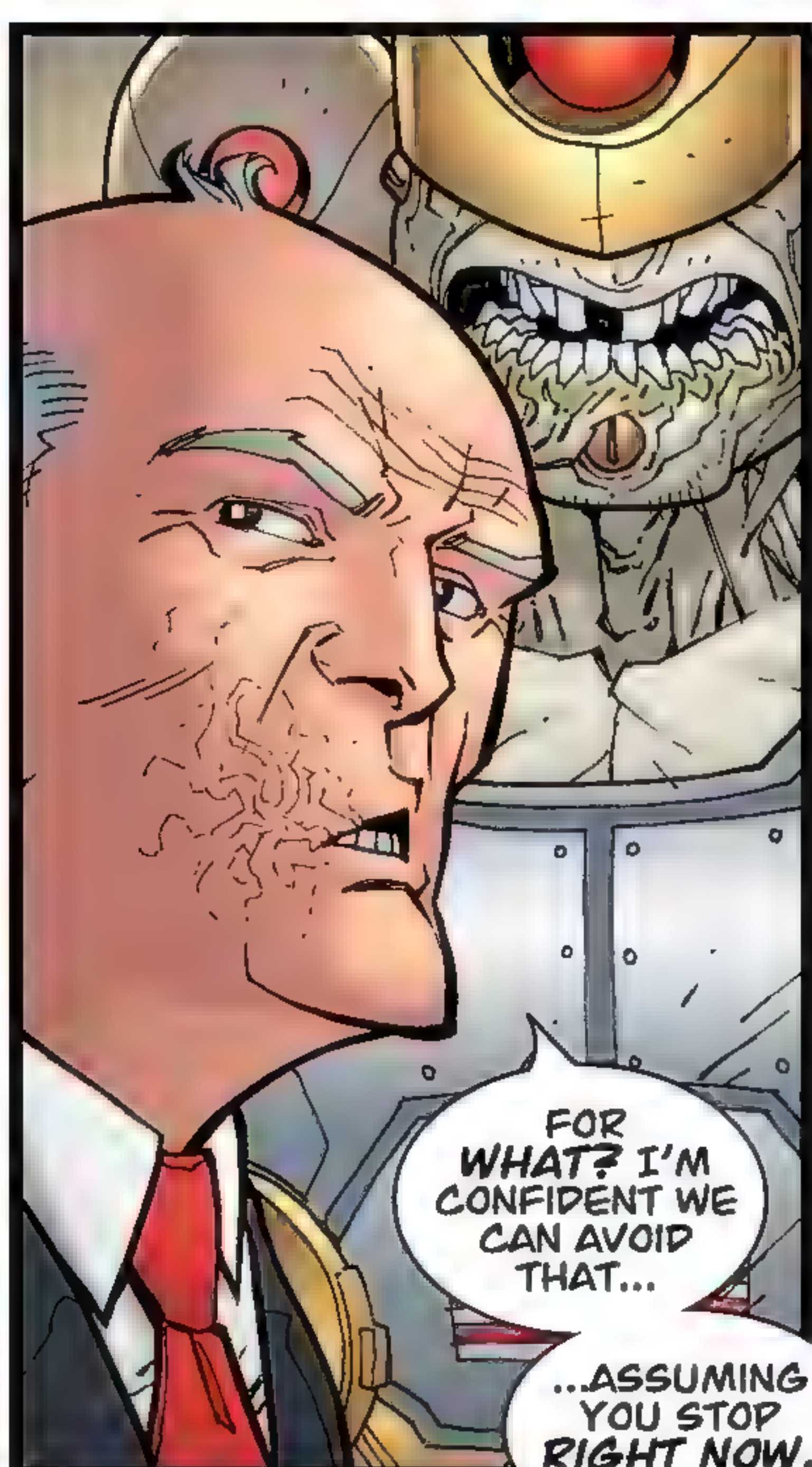
UH...

YEAH, WE COULD BE HERE ALL DAY AT THE RATE YOU'RE GOING.

SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST GIVE UP?



THEN WHAT? ARE YOU GOING TO ARREST ME?



FOR WHAT? I'M CONFIDENT WE CAN AVOID THAT...

...ASSUMING YOU STOP RIGHT NOW.



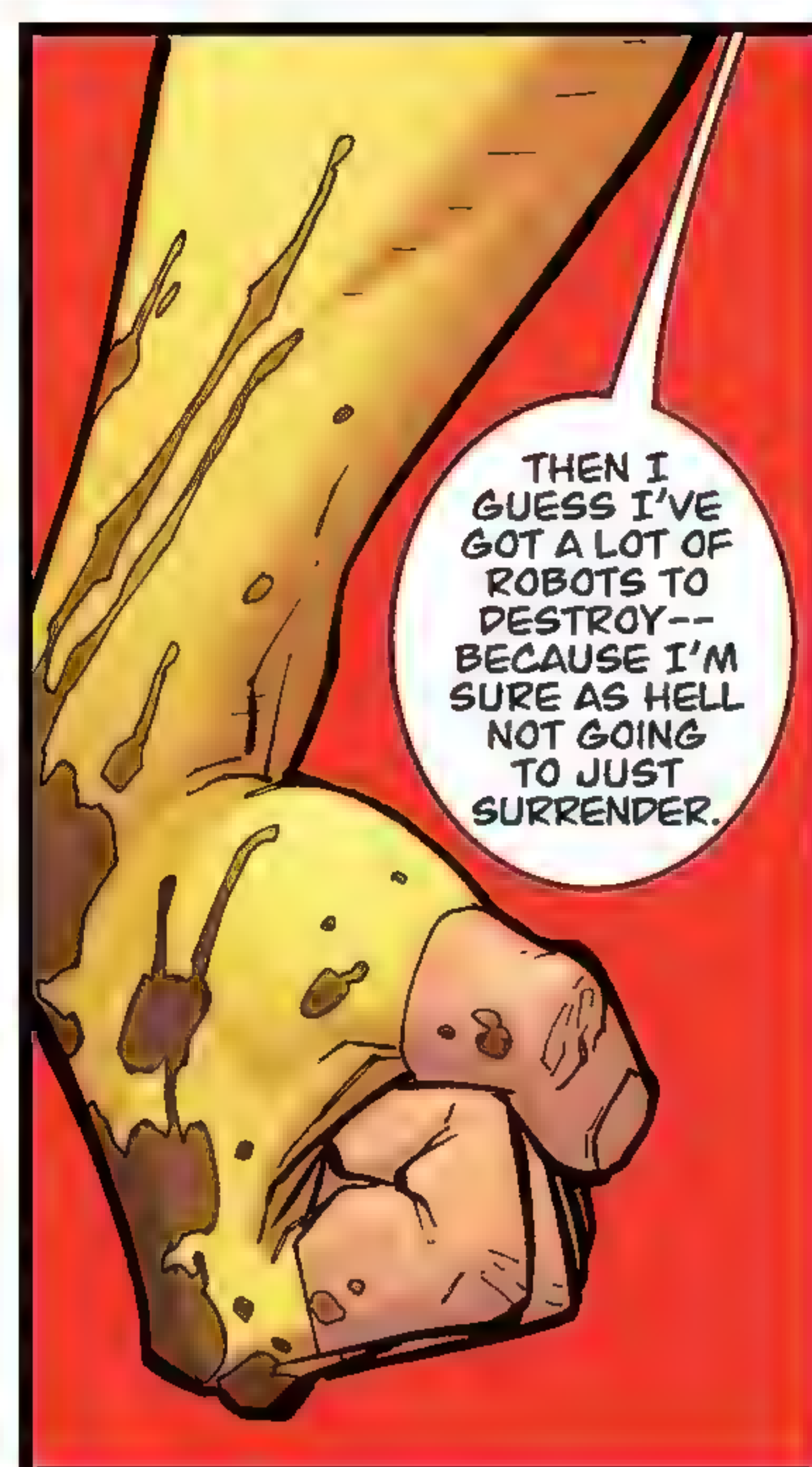
THEN WHAT? WE JUST FORGET THIS EVER HAPPENED? FORGET YOU'VE GOT DOCTOR FRANKENSTEIN RUNNING FREE--MAKING ZOMBIE SOLDIERS--PRETEND YOU'RE NOT HIRING MURDERERS?!

HOW ABOUT THIS-- YOU ARREST D.A. SINCLAIR AND DARKWING--AND I'LL THINK ABOUT STANDING DOWN.



IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO CONTINUE WORKING FOR ME--THEN I'LL NEED THEM MORE THAN EVER.

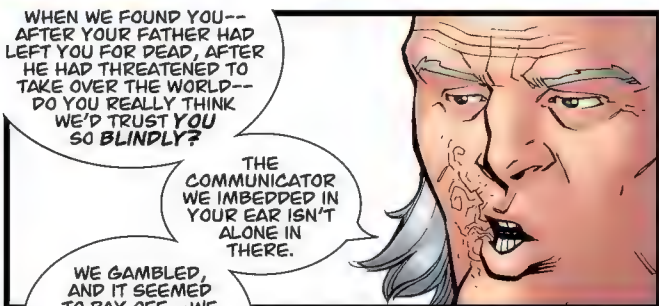
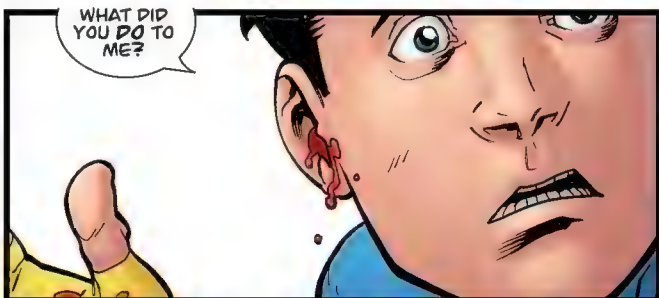
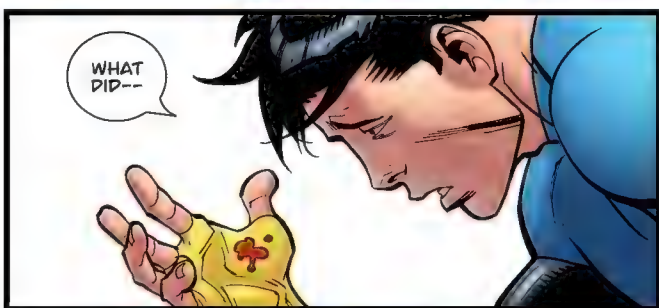
NO, I'M SORRY THAT ME WORKING WITH THEM INTERFERES WITH YOUR STRICT VIEWS ON RIGHT AND WRONG THAT ARE BORN OUT OF A NEED TO PROVE YOU'RE NOT YOUR FATHER--BUT I WON'T STOP WORKING WITH THEM ANY TIME SOON.



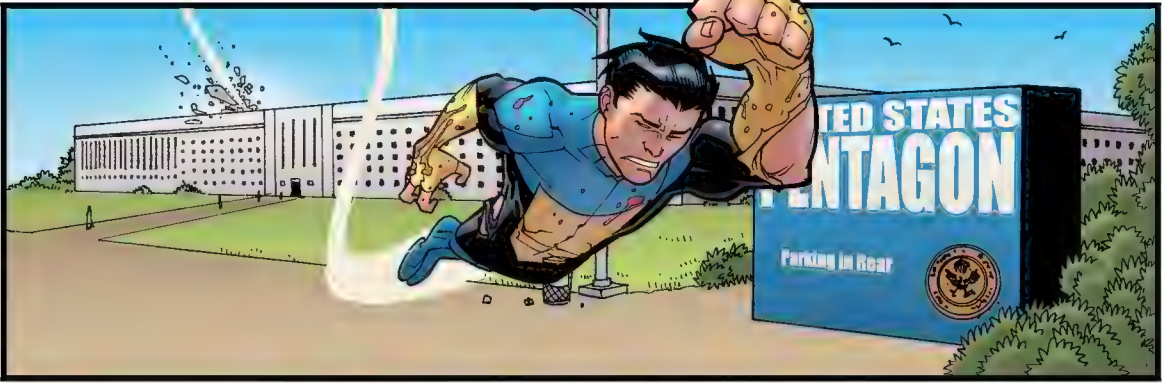
THEN I GUESS I'VE GOT A LOT OF ROBOTS TO DESTROY-- BECAUSE I'M SURE AS HELL NOT GOING TO JUST SURRENDER.

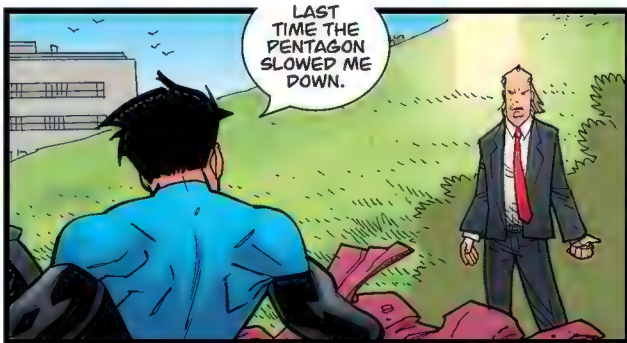
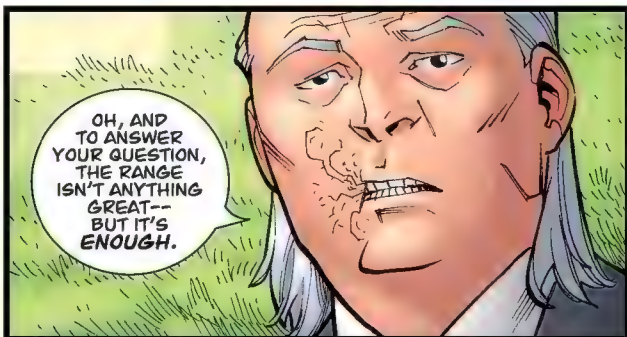
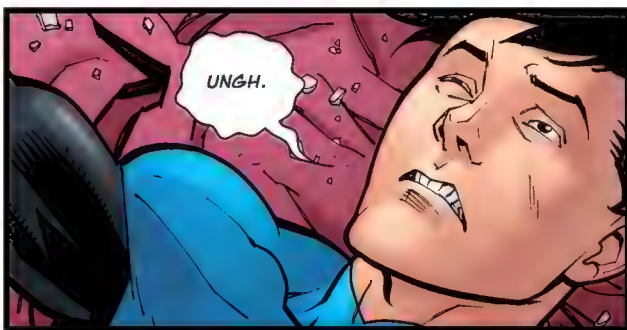
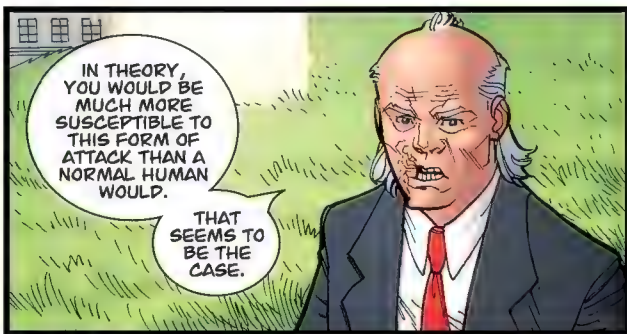
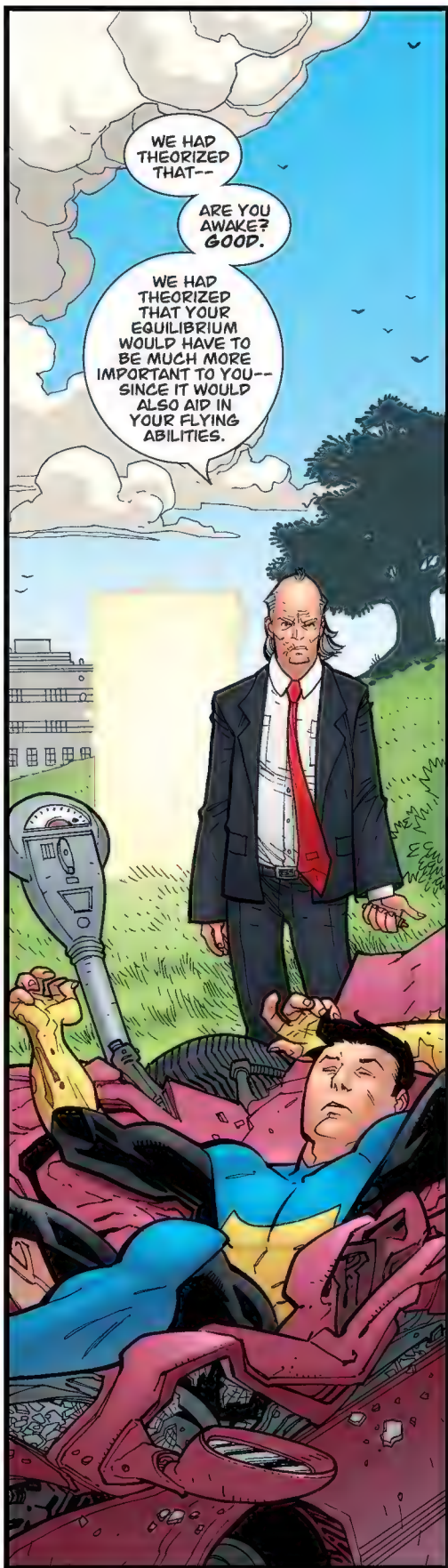


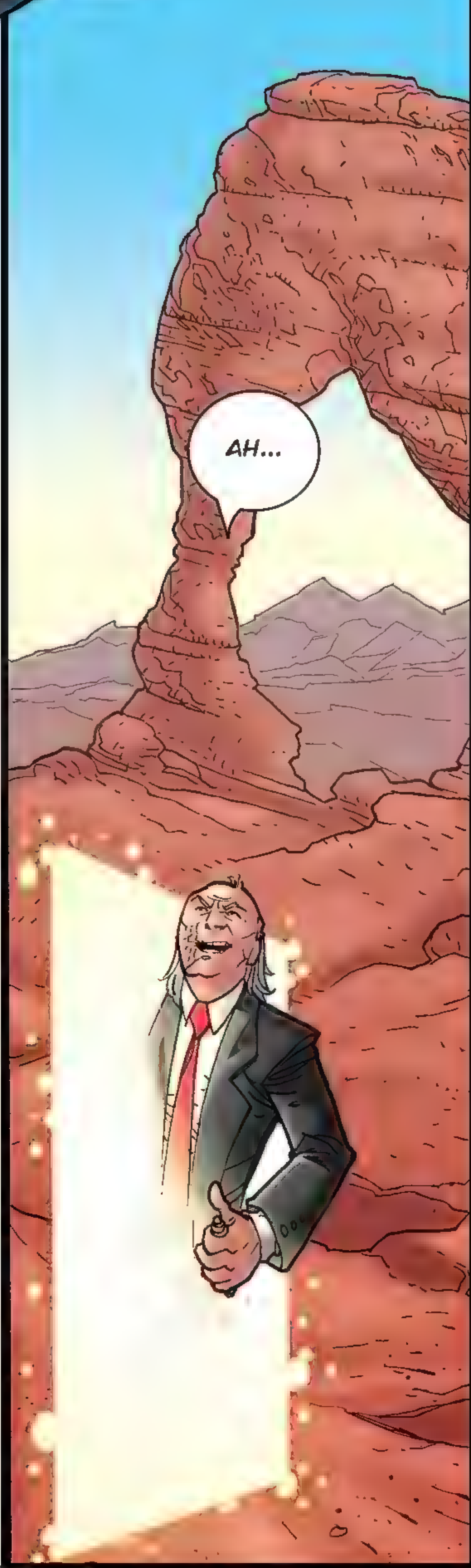
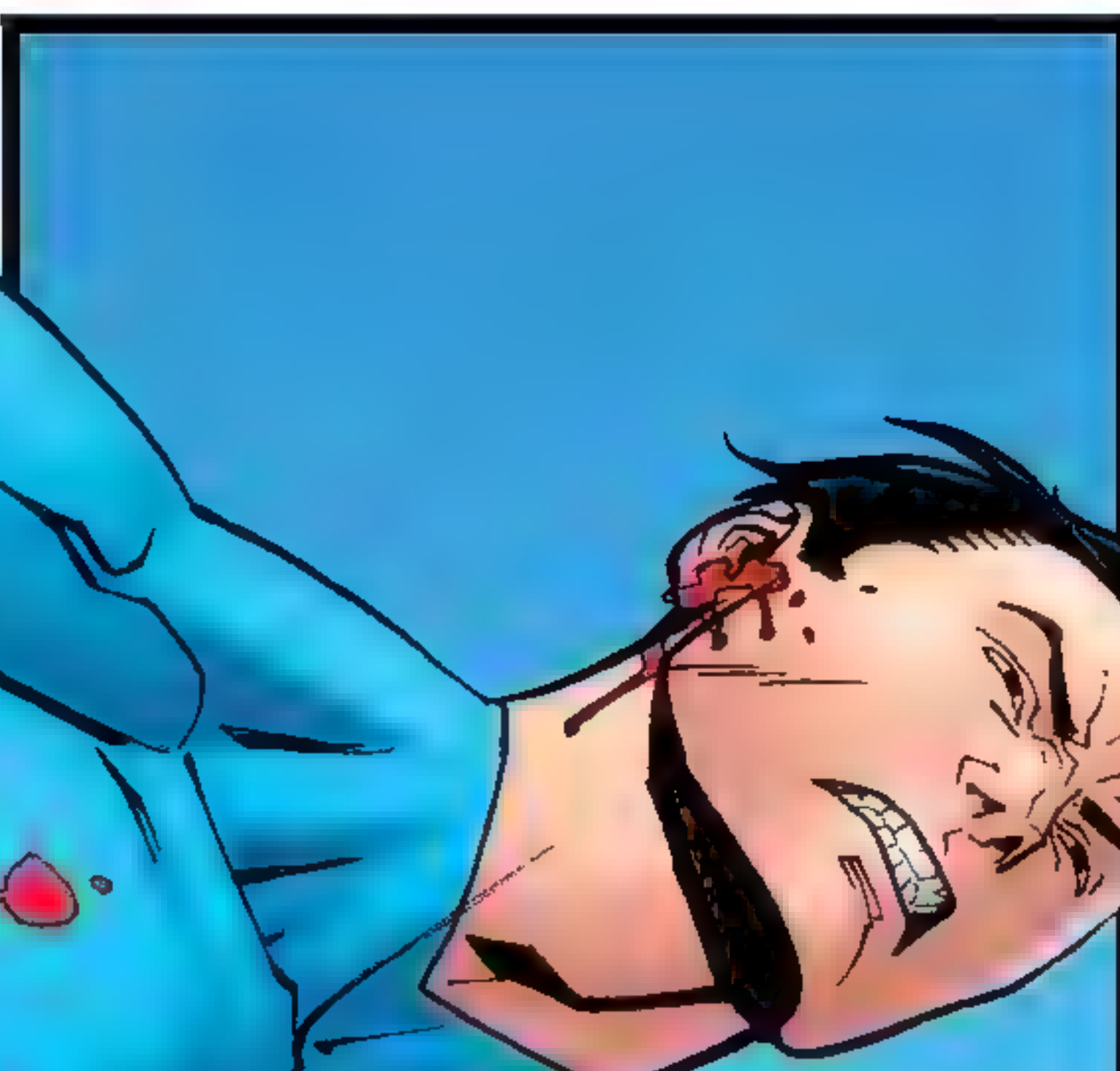
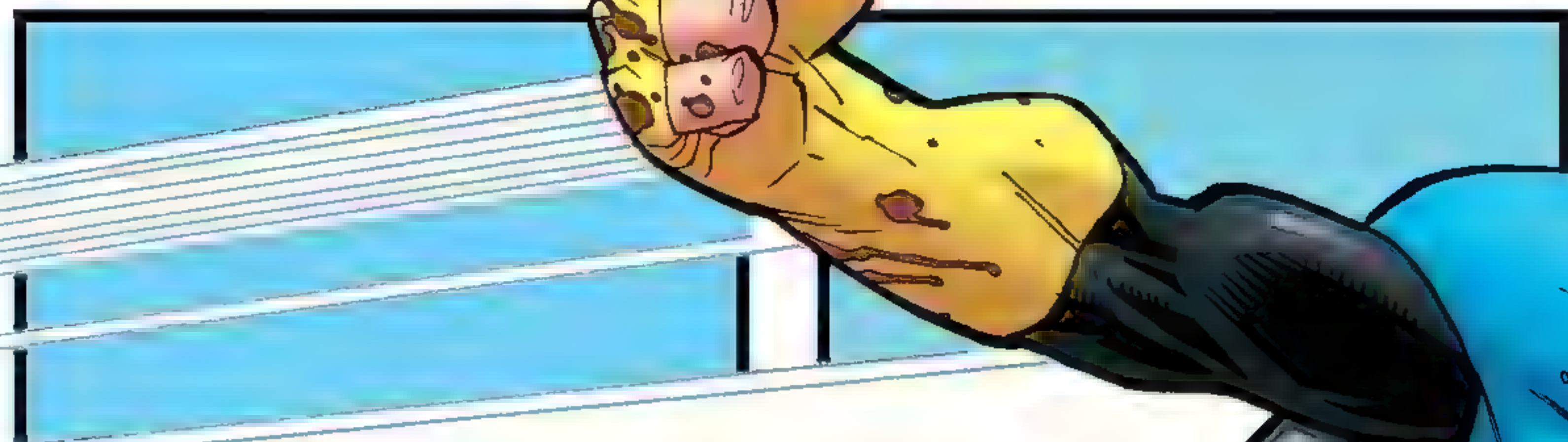
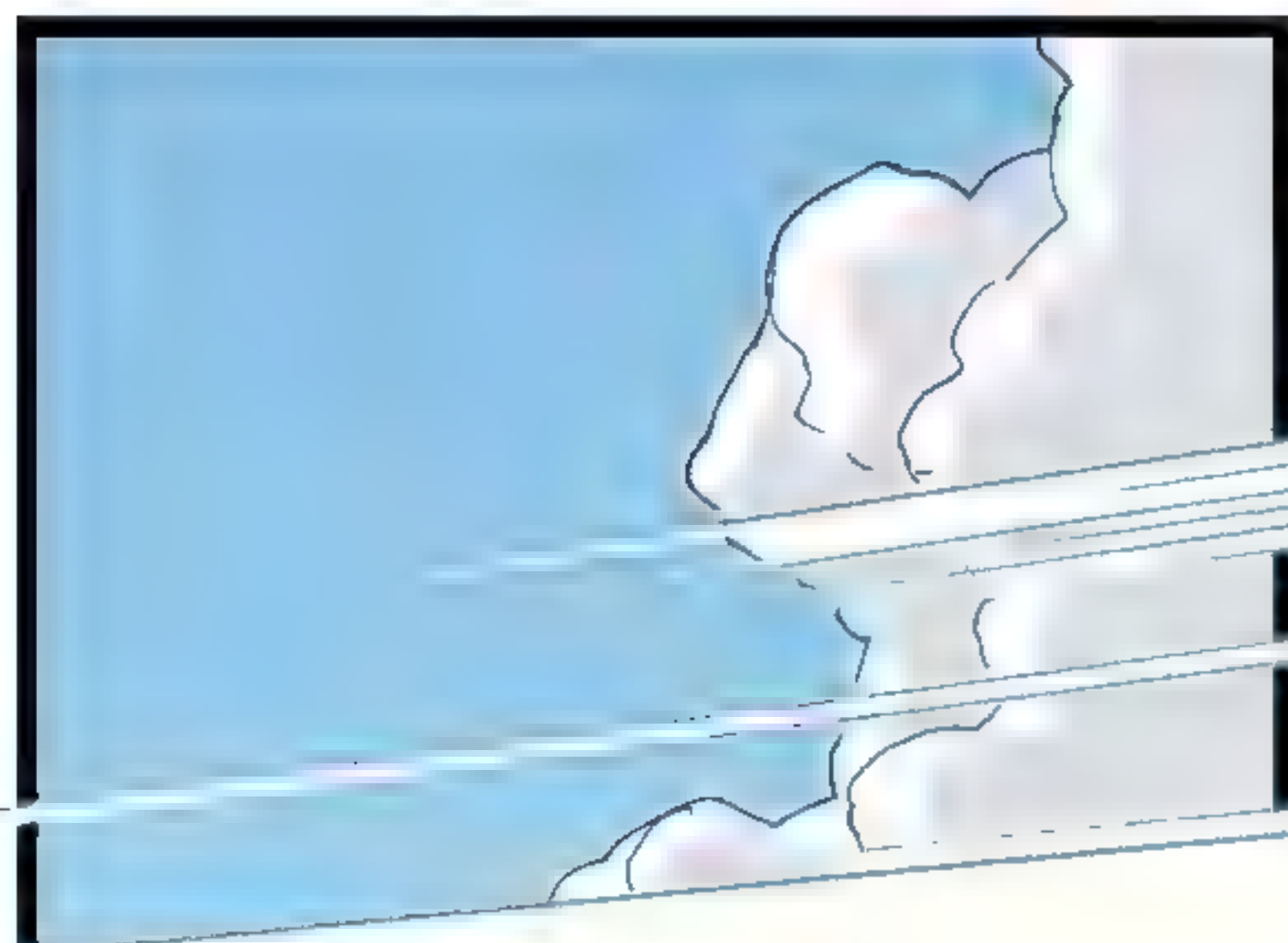
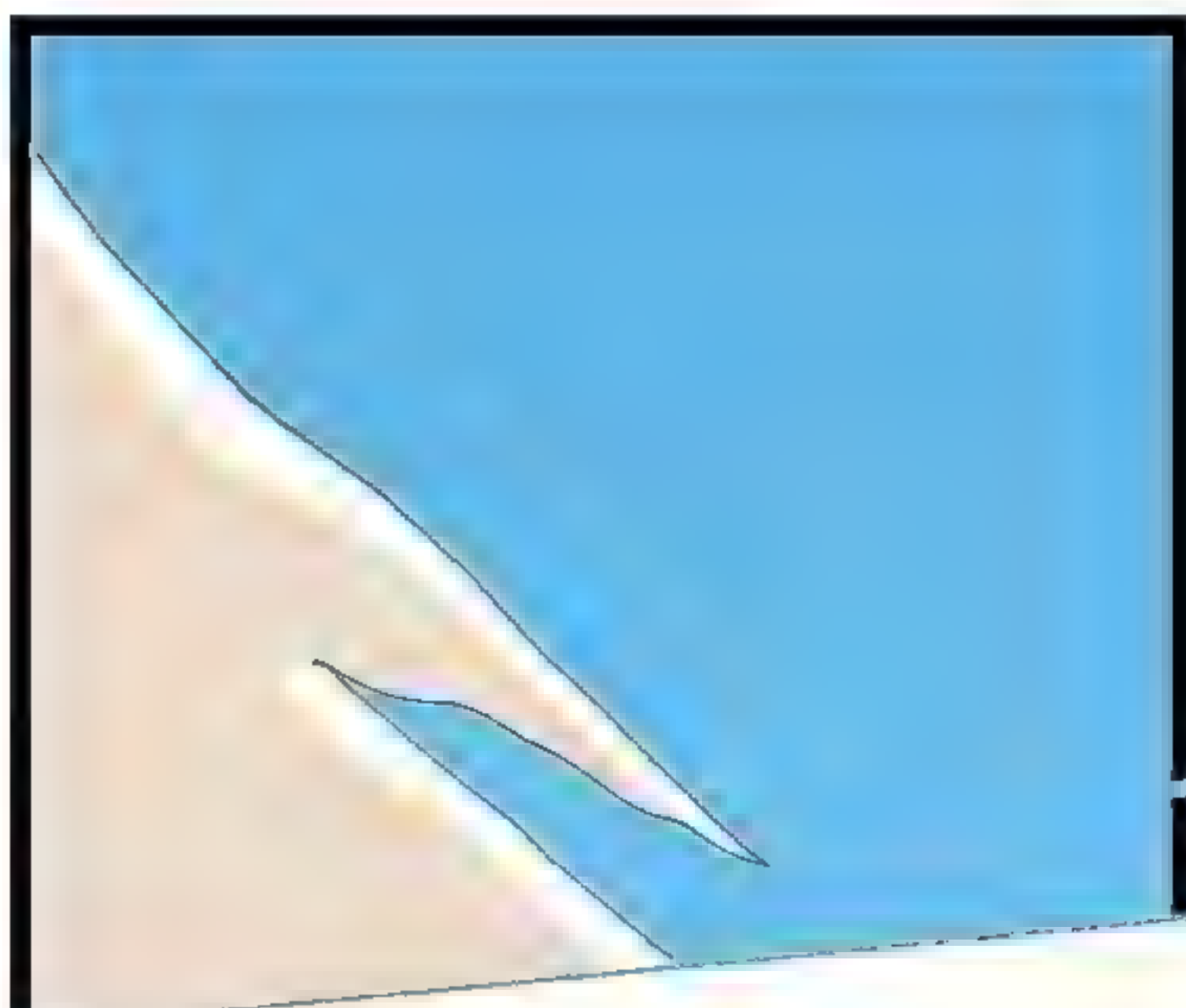
ACTUALLY, I THINK YOU'VE COST THE AMERICAN TAXPAYERS QUITE ENOUGH ALREADY. I'VE GOT A MUCH MORE EFFICIENT WAY OF KEEPING YOU IN CHECK.



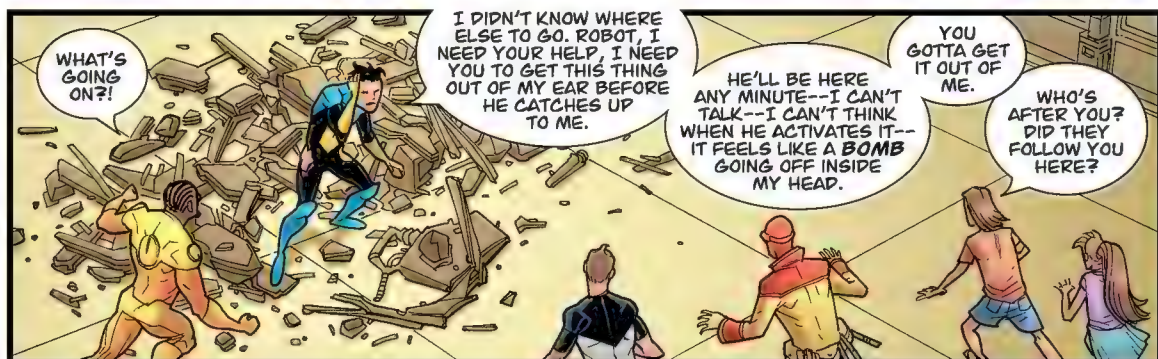














I KNOW SOME OF YOU CONSIDER YOURSELVES TO BE FRIENDS WITH INVINCIBLE, I WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME BEFORE TODAY--BUT LISTEN TO ME WHEN I SAY THIS--HE IS NO FRIEND TO ANY OF US NOW.

HE IS DOING EVERYTHING HE CAN TO COMPROMISE THE SECURITY OF THIS PLANET. HE IS UNDERMINING ME AND MY ORGANIZATION--THE ORGANIZATION THAT FUNDS THIS TEAM.

I HATE THAT IT'S COME TO THIS, BUT I MUST ASK YOU TO HELP ME RESTRAIN HIM.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, INVINCIBLE? YOU'VE BEEN ACTING LIKE A MANIAC SINCE WE DEFEATED DOC SEISMIC EARLIER.

DON'T LISTEN TO HIM--HE'S NOT TELLING YOU THE WHOLE STORY!

HE'S EMPLOYING MURDERERS! THE MAN WHO HELPED US STOP DOC SEISMIC, DARKWING, HE'S A MURDERER--I KNOW YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME BUT IT'S TRUE.

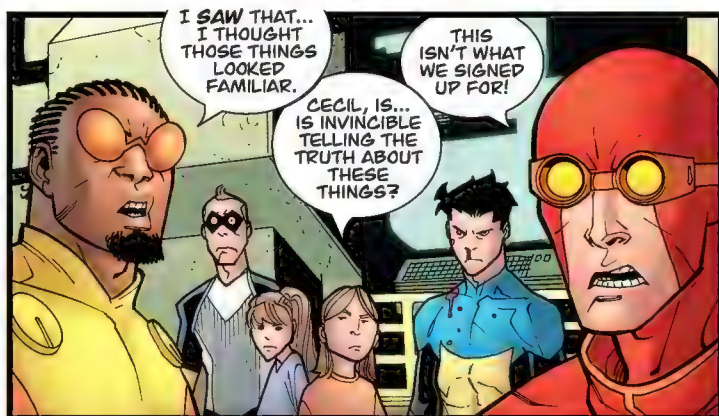
I WAS SENT INTO MIDNIGHT CITY BY CECIL--SENT IN TO STOP A MURDERER. I FOUND OUT IT WAS DARKWING, HE'D SNAPPED, HE WAS KILLING ANYONE WHO BROKE THE LAW.

I ARRESTED HIM--I THOUGHT HE WAS IN JAIL. CECIL SUPPRESSED THE TRUTH--PUT HIM ON THE PAYROLL!

I KNOW DARKWING. HE WAS ALWAYS ARROGANT, EVEN HATEFUL... BUT I DON'T SEE HIM BEING A MURDERER.

THESE ROBOTS--THESE REANIMEN HE'S GOT WITH HIM. THEY WERE INVENTED BY A MAN WHO BUILT THEM AROUND HOMELESS PEOPLE AND COLLEGE STUDENTS--MY FRIENDS. THEY ATTACKED MY COLLEGE CAMPUS TWICE--YOU HAD TO SEE THAT ON THE NEWS!

HE KILLED MORE THAN A DOZEN PEOPLE PERFECTING THOSE MONSTROSITIES.

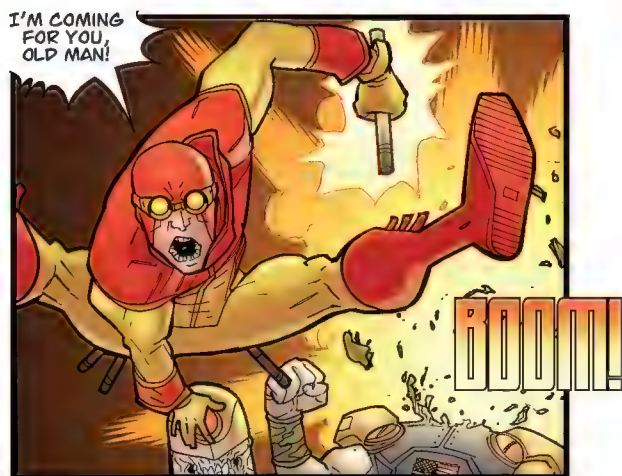
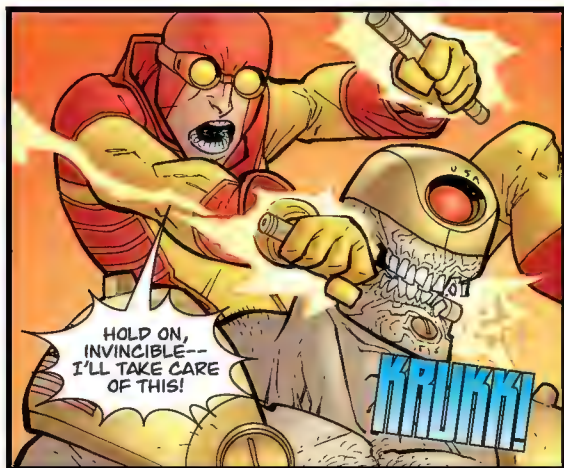


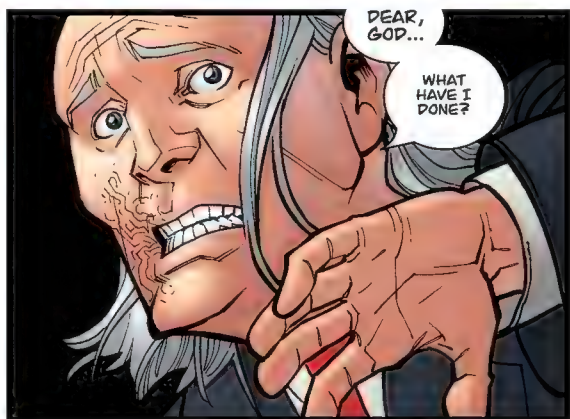
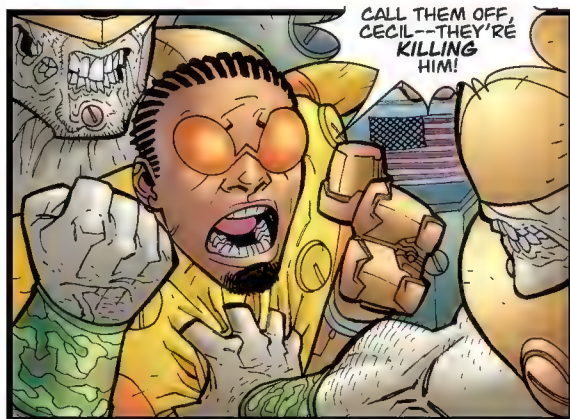
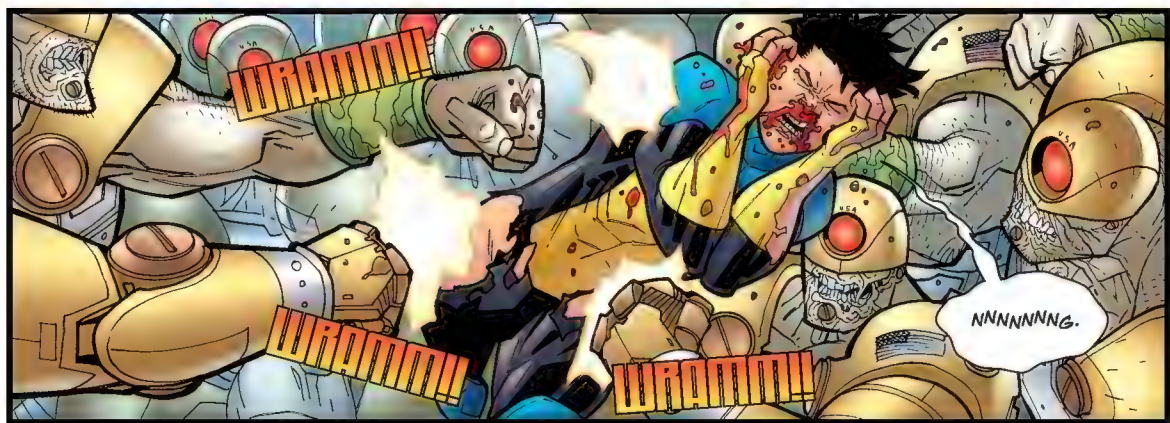
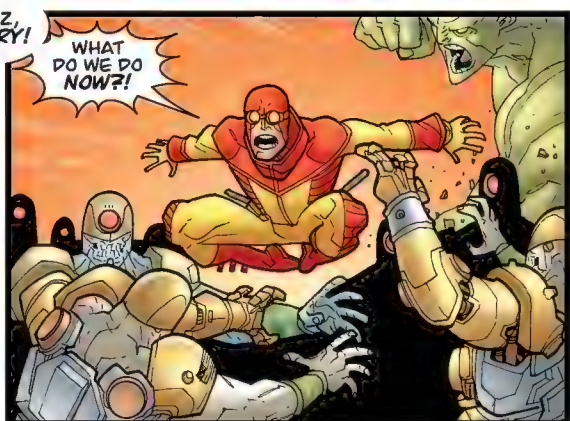
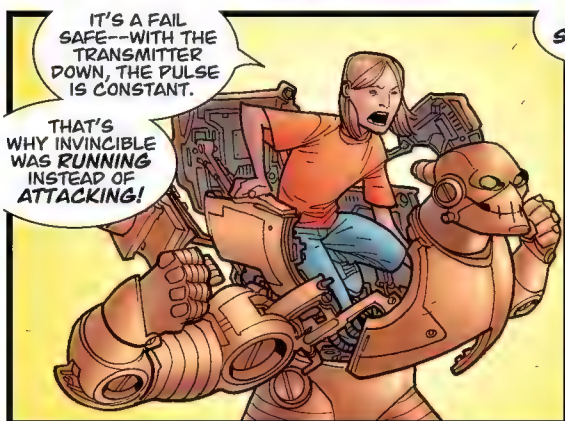
I SAW THAT... I THOUGHT THOSE THINGS LOOKED FAMILIAR.

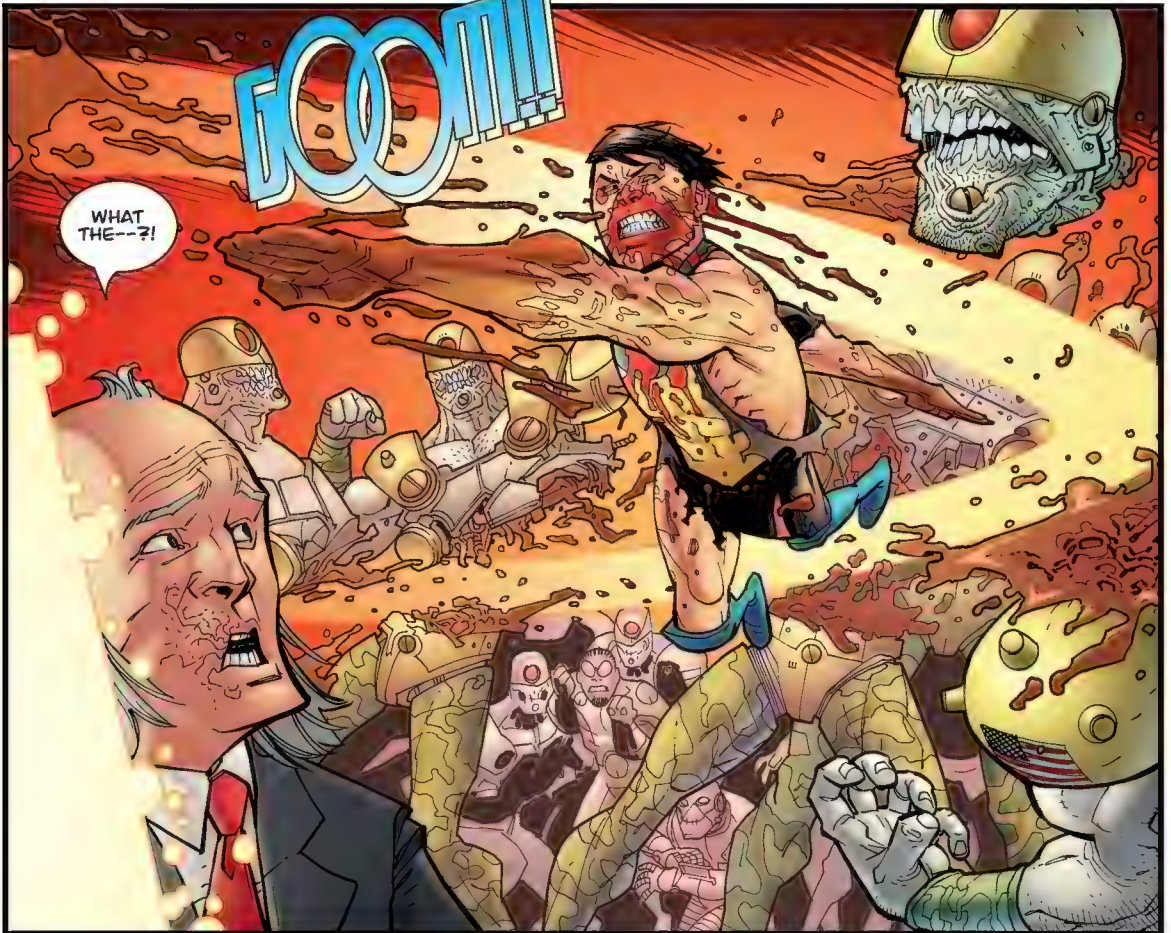
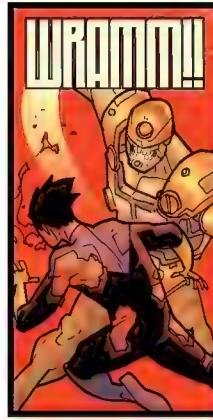
THIS ISN'T WHAT WE SIGNED UP FOR!

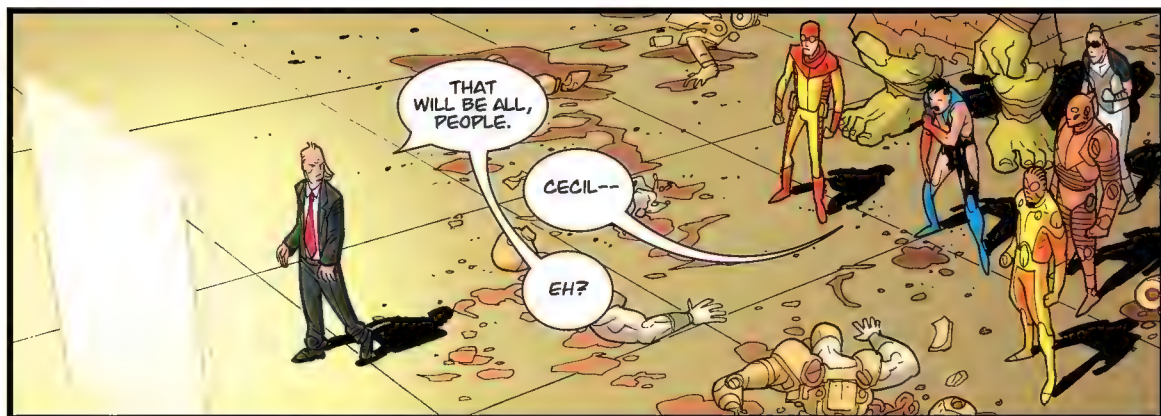
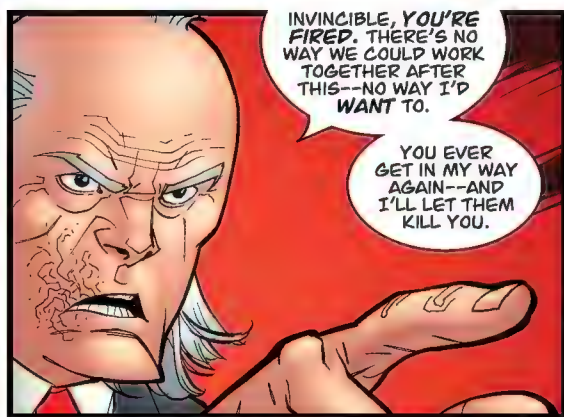
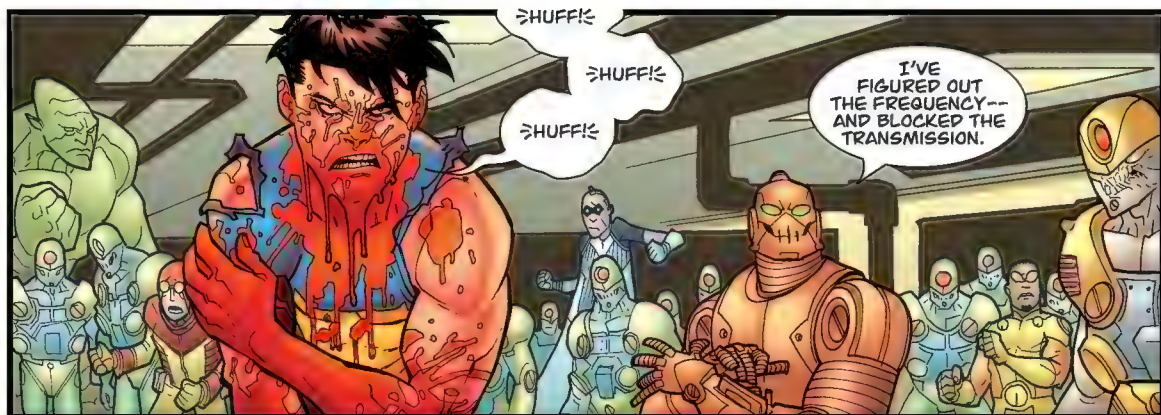
CECIL, IS... IS INVINCIBLE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT THESE THINGS?

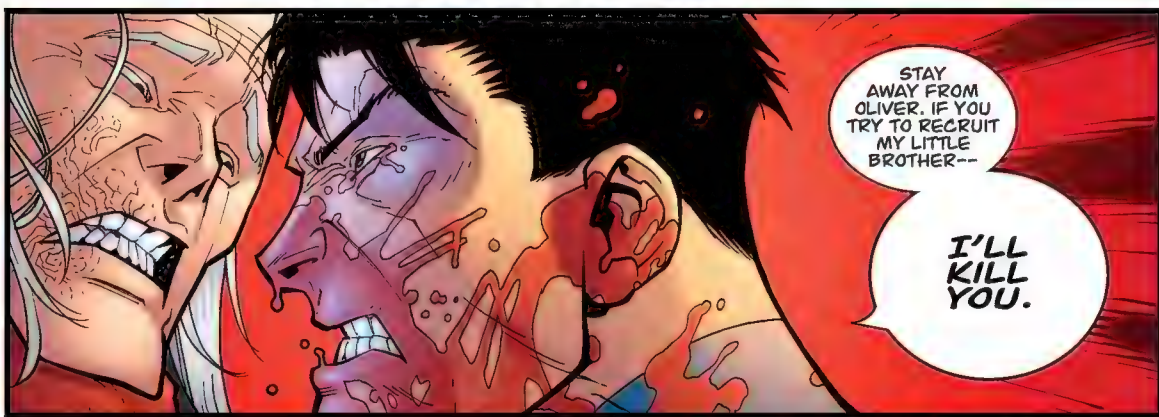


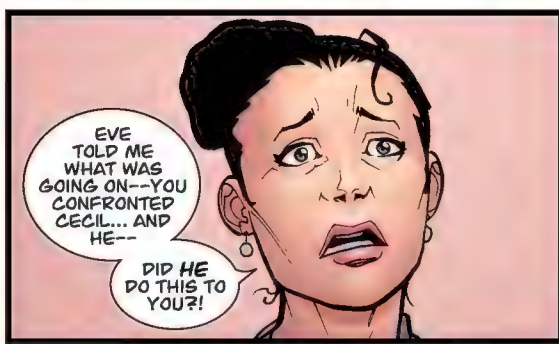
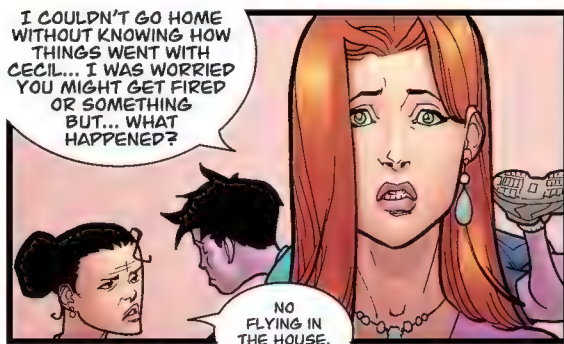
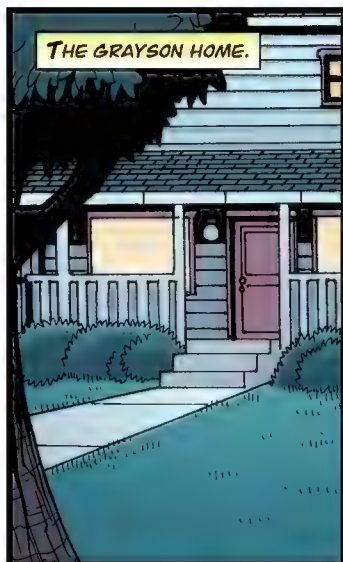














EVE,
WAIT--

OH, I WASN'T GOING
TO GO WITHOUT SAYING
GOODBYE... I JUST
THOUGHT YOU AND YOUR
MOM WOULD WANT TO BE
ALONE FOR A MINUTE...
TO TALK ABOUT
STUFF.

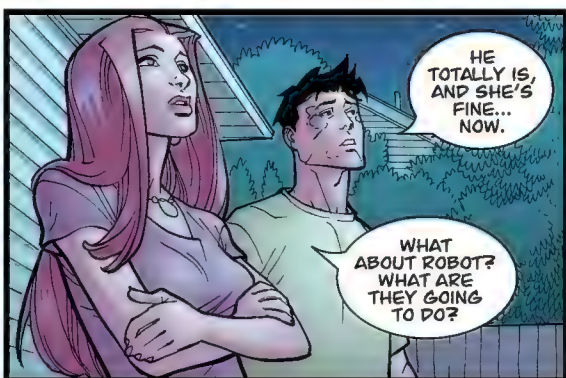
AND IT'S
A PRETTY
NIGHT.



YEAH.

YOUR MOM
CALMED DOWN?
I THOUGHT SHE
WAS GOING TO
DRIVE TO THE
PENTAGON ON
HER OWN.

P.S. YOUR
BROTHER IS
AWESOME.
HAVE I TOLD
YOU THAT?



HE
TOTALLY IS,
AND SHE'S
FINE...
NOW.

WHAT
ABOUT ROBOT?
WHAT ARE
THEY GOING
TO DO?

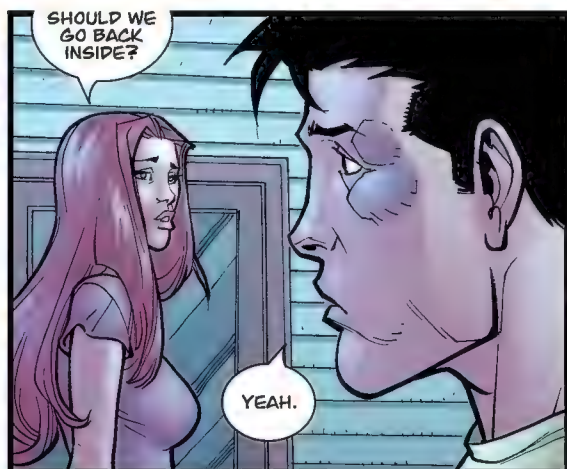


THEY'RE QUITTING.
ROBOT AND MONSTER
GIRL ARE... AND REX,
HIM TOO FOR SURE.
BULLETPROOF IS
A MAYBE.

SHAPESMITH
HAS SOME KIND OF
HERO-WORSHIP
THING GOING ON WITH
IMMORTAL, SO IF HE
DOESN'T QUIT, NEITHER
WILL SHAPESMITH--AND
IMMORTAL'S SO TIGHT
WITH CECIL HE'S
NOT GOING
ANYWHERE.

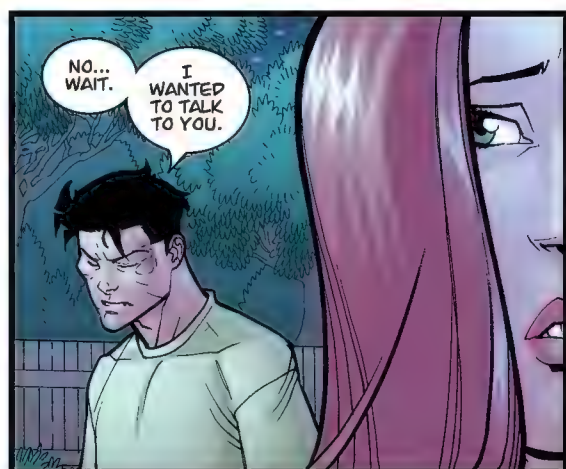
I DON'T
KNOW ABOUT
THE REST.
KATE, SAMSON...
THEY'LL
PROBABLY
STAY.

AFTER
ROBOT TOOK
THAT DEVICE
OUT OF MY EAR,
HE MENTIONED
SOMETHING ABOUT
STILL HAVING THE
TEEN TEAM'S OLD
BASE--WHOEVER
QUITS MIGHT START
WORKING OUT OF
THAT AGAIN.



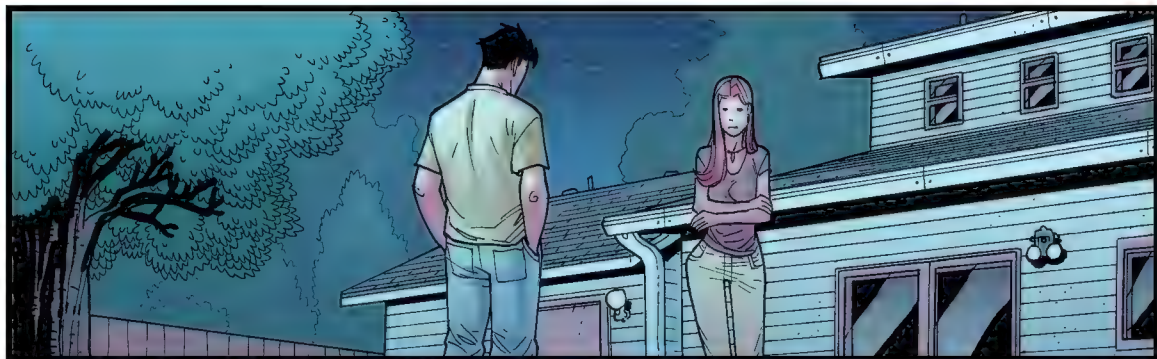
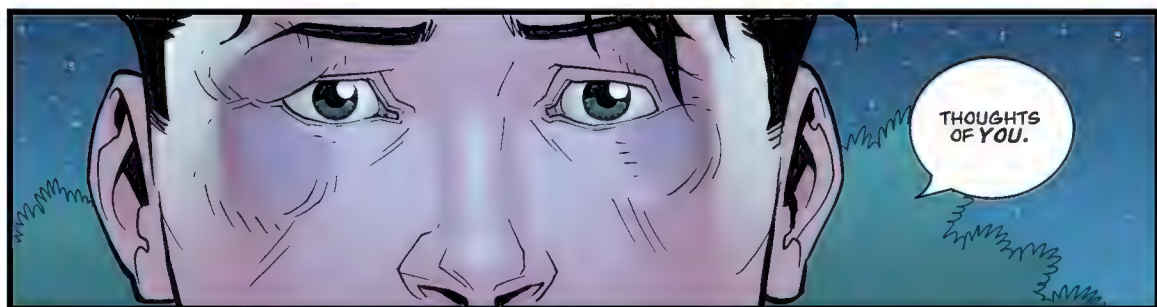
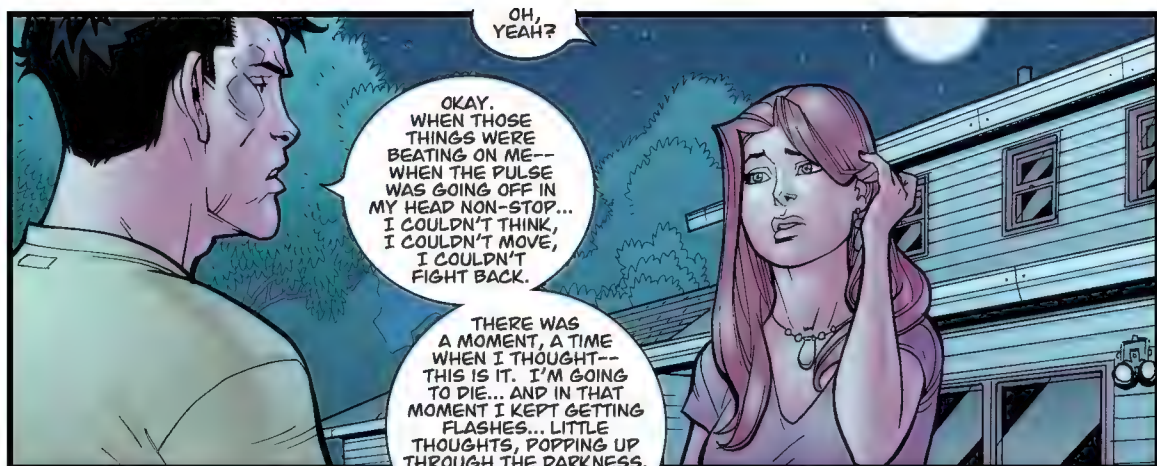
SHOULD WE
GO BACK
INSIDE?

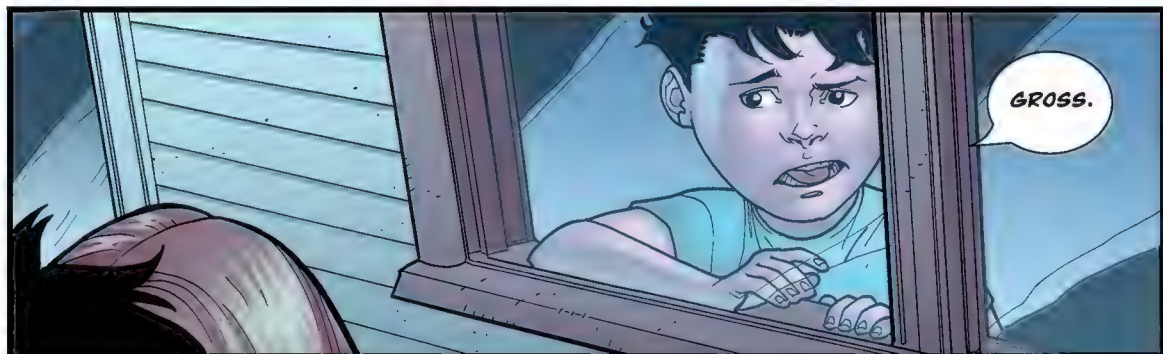
YEAH.



NO...
WAIT.

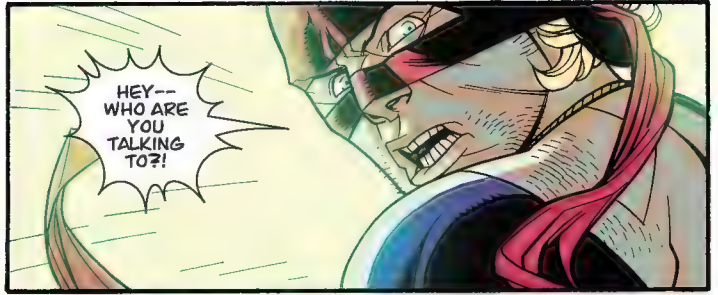
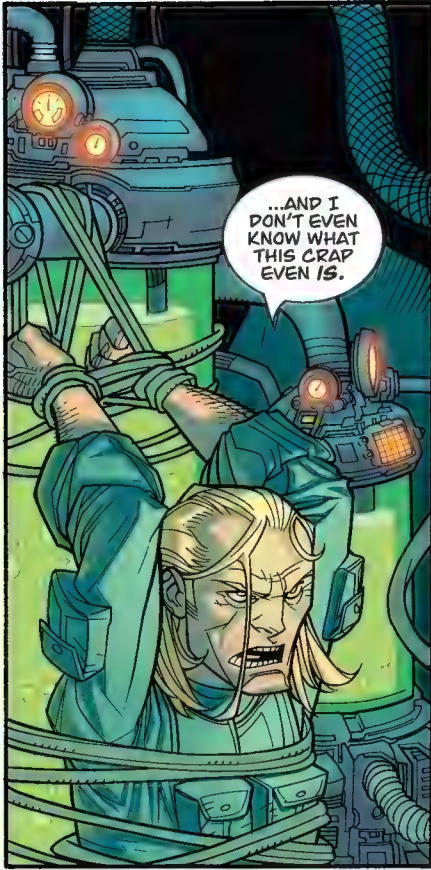
I
WANTED
TO TALK
TO YOU.





AT LONG LAST--THE SECRET ORIGIN OF CECIL STEDMAN!





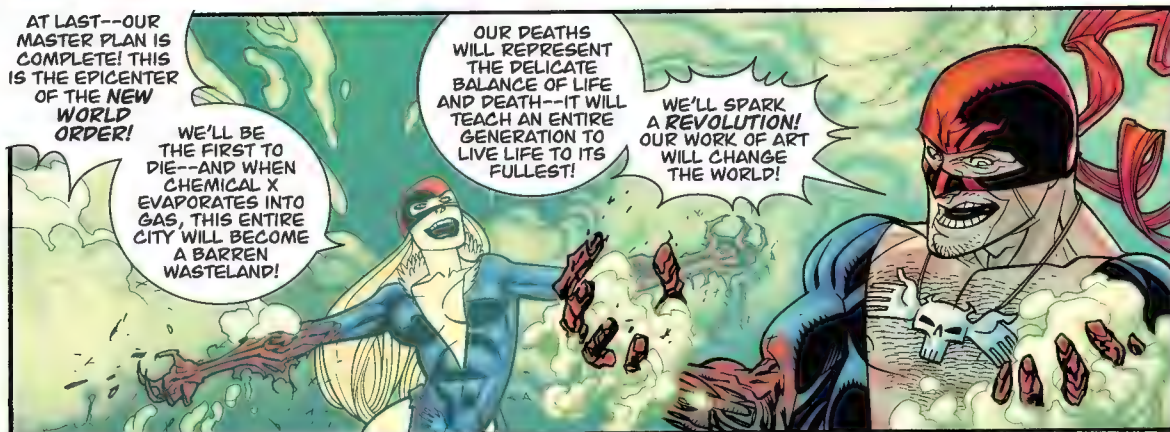


AT LAST--OUR
MASTER PLAN IS
COMPLETE! THIS
IS THE EPICENTER
OF THE NEW
WORLD
ORDER!

WE'LL BE
THE FIRST TO
DIE--AND WHEN
CHEMICAL X
EVAPORATES INTO
GAS, THIS ENTIRE
CITY WILL BECOME
A BARREN
WASTELAND!

OUR DEATHS
WILL REPRESENT
THE DELICATE
BALANCE OF LIFE
AND DEATH--IT WILL
TEACH AN ENTIRE
GENERATION TO
LIVE LIFE TO ITS
FULLEST!

WE'LL SPARK
A REVOLUTION!
OUR WORK OF ART
WILL CHANGE
THE WORLD!



STOW IT,
CRAZIES!

HQ--LISTEN
UP! WE'VE GOT
A SITUATION
HERE!

CHEMICAL
X HAS BEEN
RELEASED!

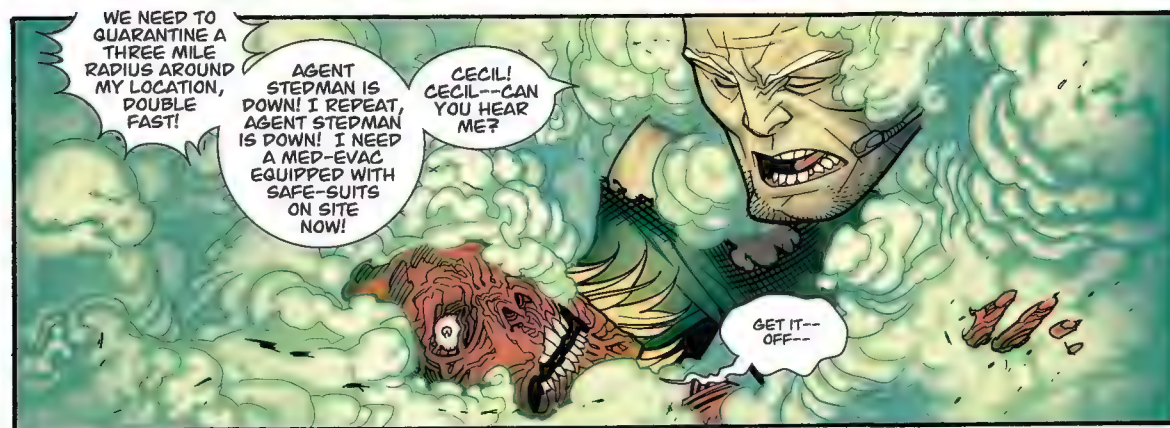


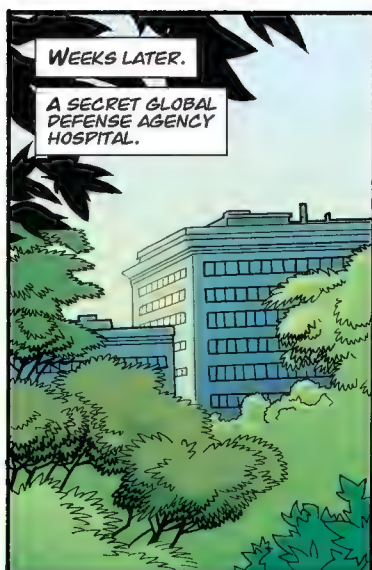
WE NEED TO
QUARANTINE A
THREE MILE
RADIUS AROUND
MY LOCATION,
DOUBLE
FAST!

AGENT
STEPMAN IS
DOWN! I REPEAT,
AGENT STEPMAN
IS DOWN! I NEED
A MED-EVAC
EQUIPPED WITH
SAFE-SUITS
ON SITE
NOW!

CECIL!
CECIL--CAN
YOU HEAR
ME?

GET IT--
OFF--





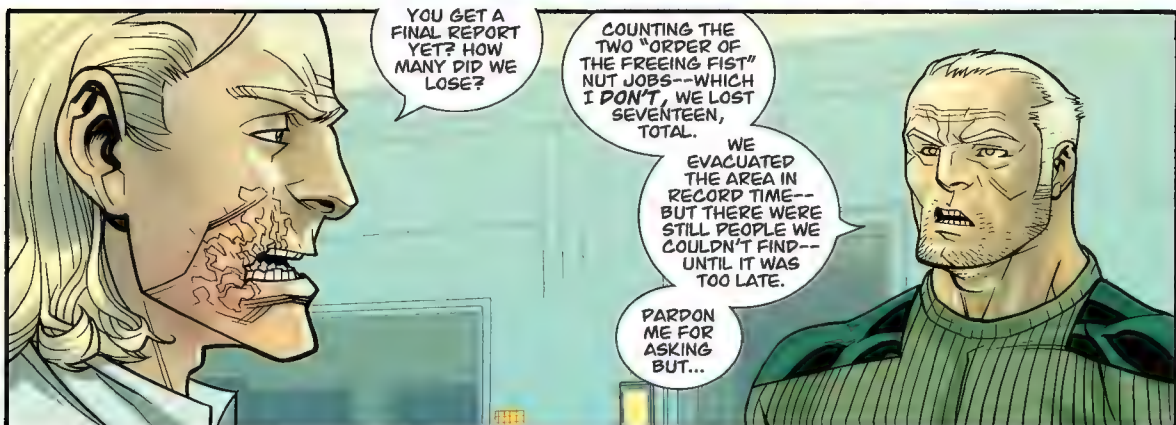
WEEKS LATER.

A SECRET GLOBAL
DEFENSE AGENCY
HOSPITAL.



THEY'RE
LETTING
YOU OUT
ALREADY?

YEAH, I'M
TIP TOP. SO
YOU PICKED THE
PERFECT TIME
TO FINALLY COME
AND VISIT.

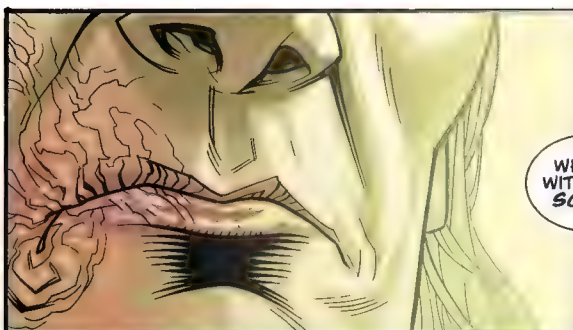


YOU GET A
FINAL REPORT
YET? HOW
MANY DID WE
LOSE?

COUNTING THE
TWO "ORDER OF
THE FREING FIST"
NUT JOBS--WHICH
I DON'T, WE LOST
SEVENTEEN,
TOTAL.

WE
EVACUATED
THE AREA IN
RECORD TIME--
BUT THERE WERE
STILL PEOPLE WE
COULDN'T FIND--
UNTIL IT WAS
TOO LATE.

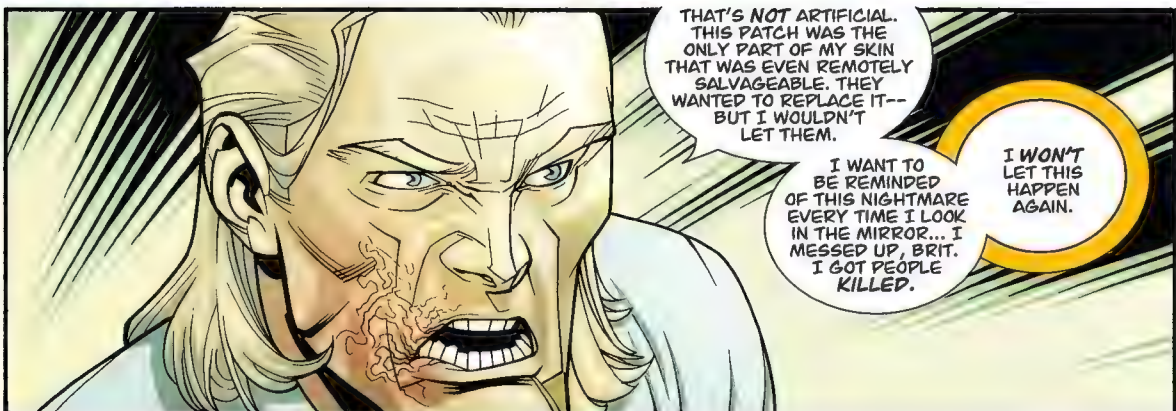
PARDON
ME FOR
ASKING
BUT...



WHAT'S
WITH THE
SCAR?



DID THEY
MESS UP WHEN
THEY WERE
APPLYING THE
ARTIFICIAL
SKIN? WHAT
GIVES?



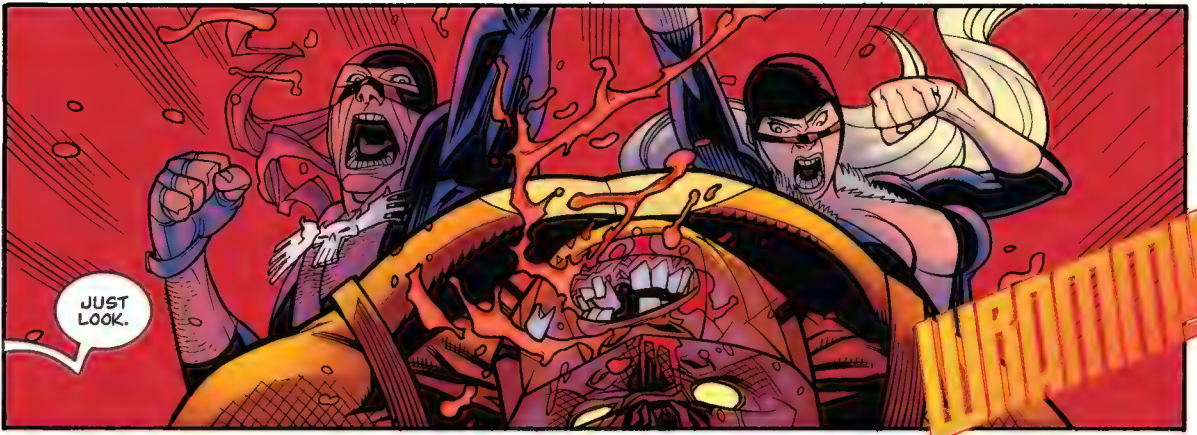
THAT'S NOT ARTIFICIAL.
THIS PATCH WAS THE
ONLY PART OF MY SKIN
THAT WAS EVEN REMOTELY
SALVAGEABLE. THEY
WANTED TO REPLACE IT--
BUT I WOULDN'T
LET THEM.

I WANT TO
BE REMINDED
OF THIS NIGHTMARE
EVERY TIME I LOOK
IN THE MIRROR... I
MESSED UP, BRIT.
I GOT PEOPLE
KILLED.

I WON'T
LET THIS
HAPPEN
AGAIN.

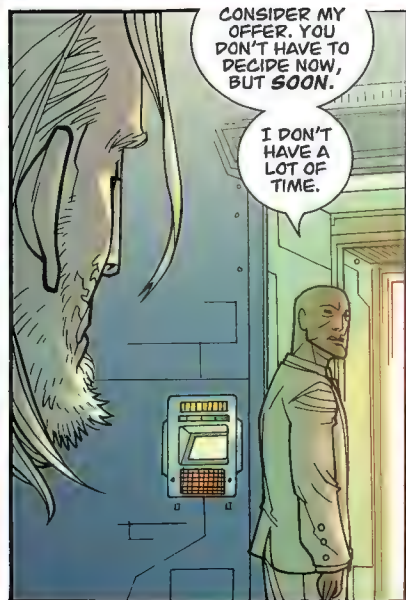
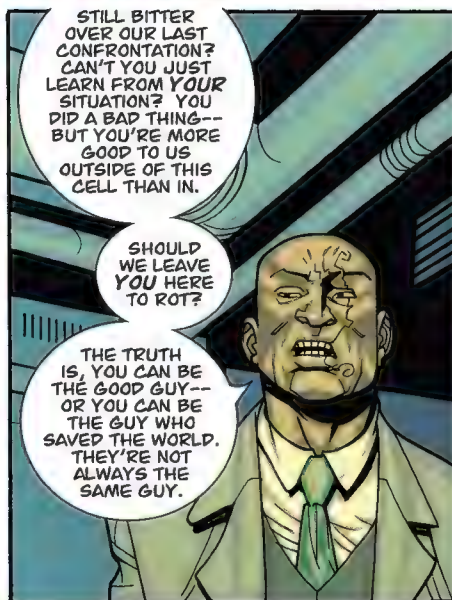
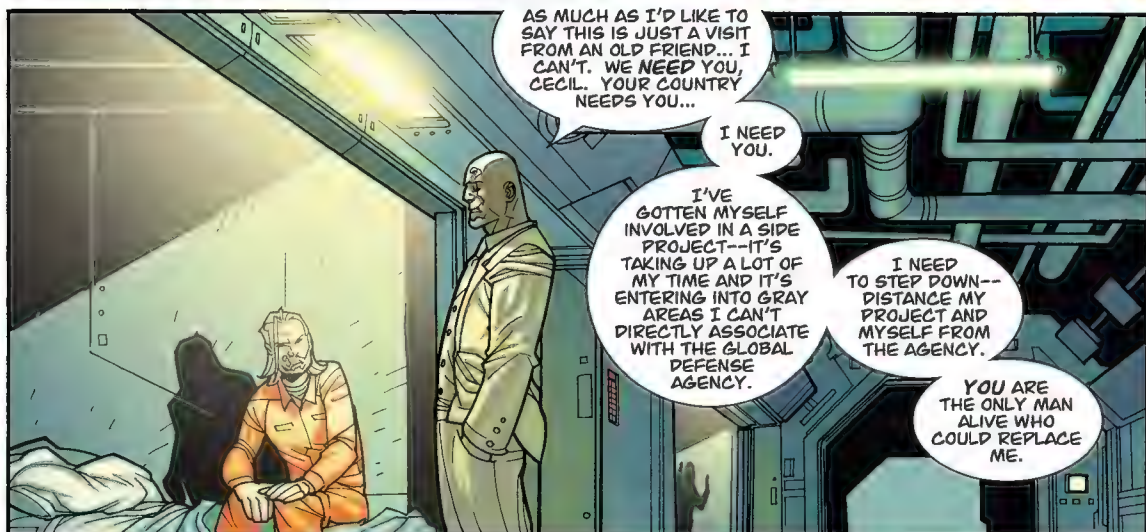
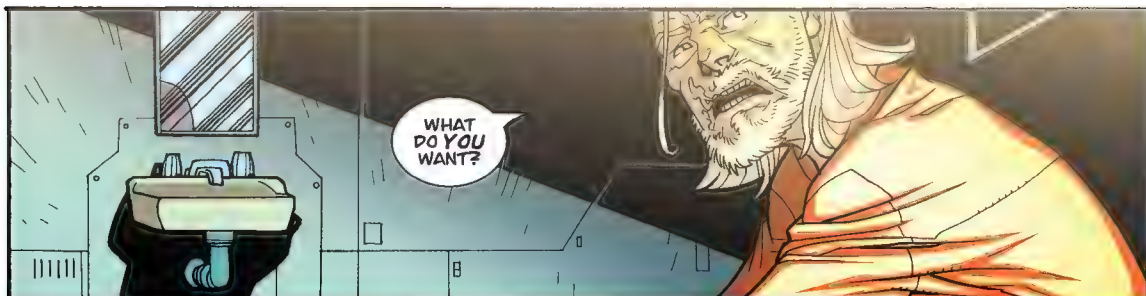
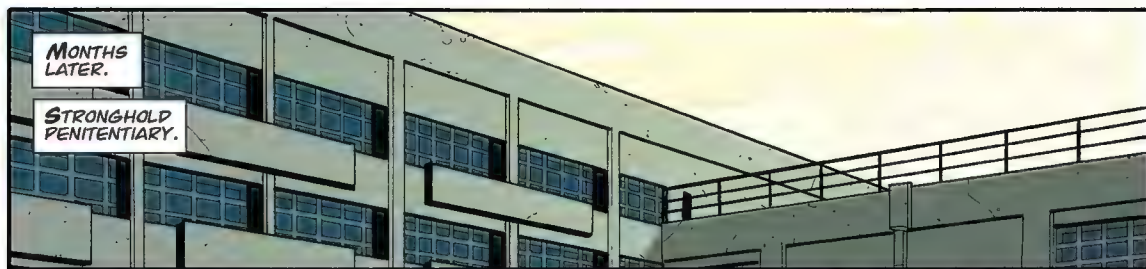


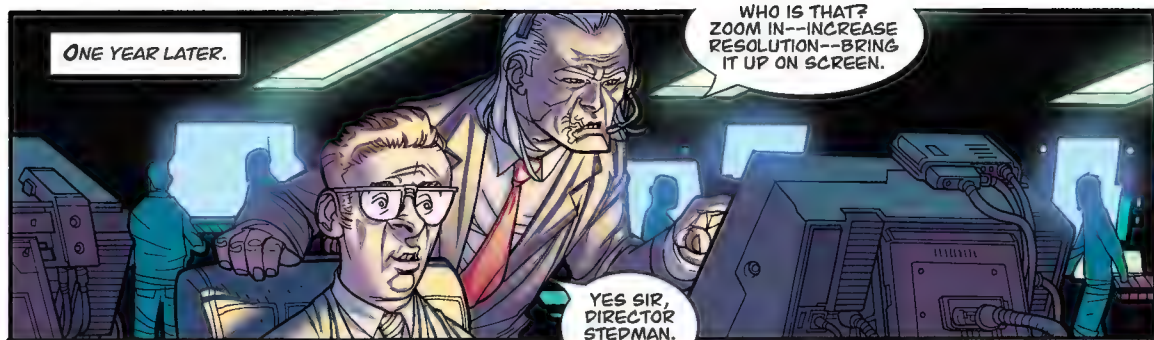






CECIL,
OLD FRIEND...
WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE?







HMN?

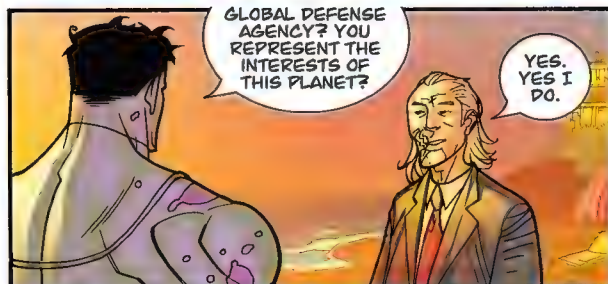
EXCUSE ME, SIR. COULD I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU?



WHO ARE YOU?



MY NAME IS CECIL STEDMAN, I'M THE HEAD OF THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY. YOU'VE DISPLAYED A RANGE OF ABILITIES HERE TODAY THAT MY AGENCY WOULD DEEM--



GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY? YOU REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF THIS PLANET?

YES. YES I DO.



THEN I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK WITH YOU AS WELL. I'VE COME HERE TO PROTECT THIS PLANET.

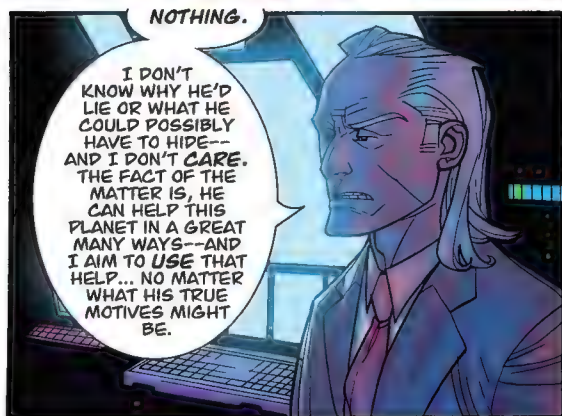
I WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE IN LEARNING THE CUSTOMS AND BEHAVIORS OF ITS PEOPLE.



THAT, I CAN DEFINITELY HELP YOU WITH--AS WELL AS YOUR MISSION IN GENERAL. YOU SEE, WE HAVE THE SAME JOB. COME BACK TO MY HEADQUARTERS WITH ME--IT'LL BE EASIER TO TALK THERE.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT. MY PEOPLE WILL CLEAN IT UP.

OKAY, BUT--



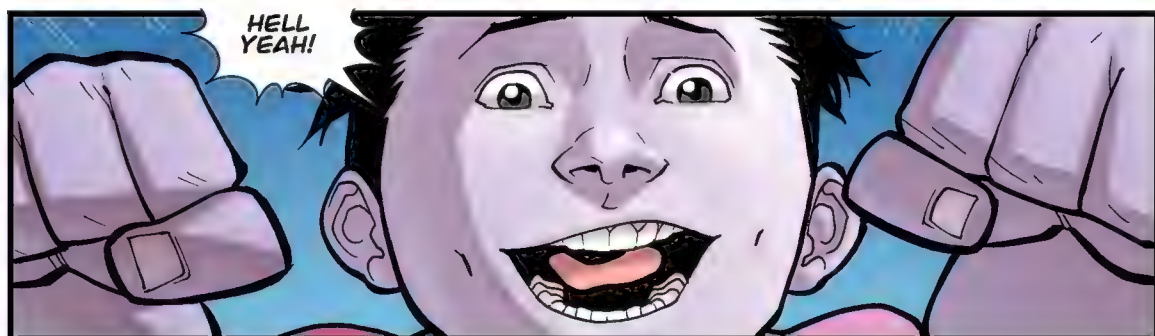
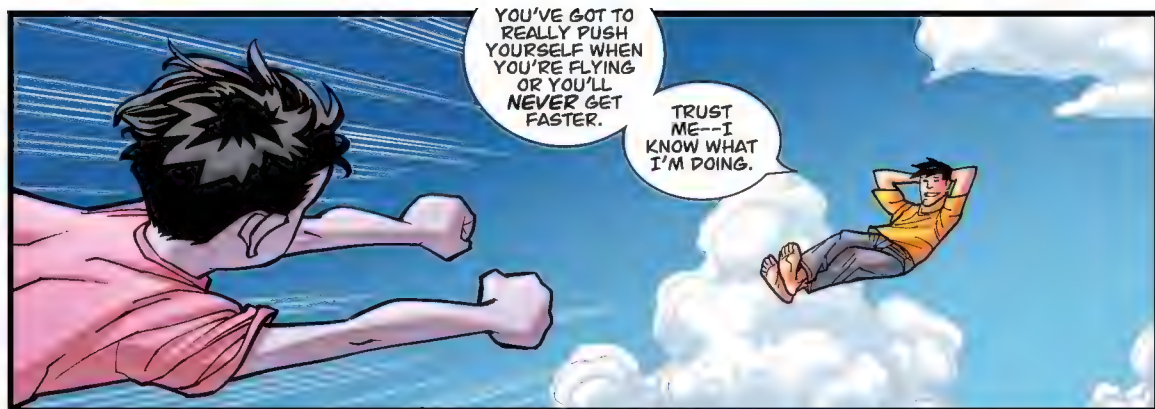


CHAPTER 51



SMILE
07





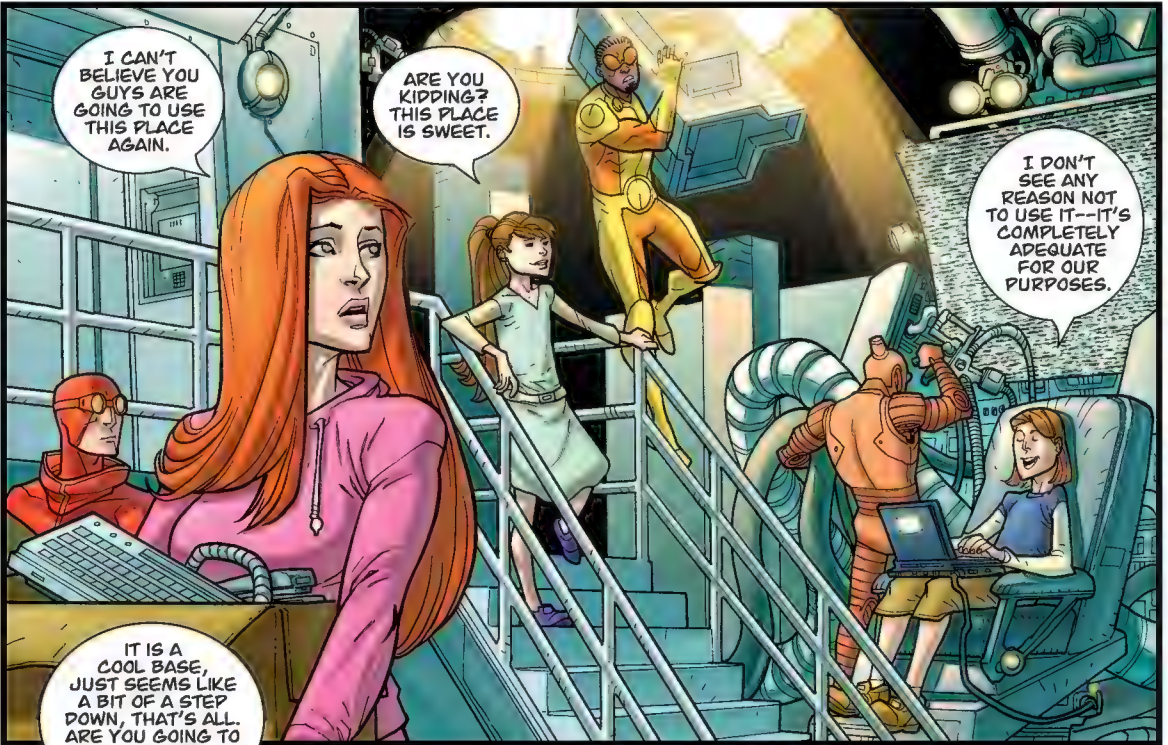
THE FORMER
BASE OF THE
TEEN TEAM.



I CAN'T
BELIEVE YOU
GUYS ARE
GOING TO USE
THIS PLACE
AGAIN.

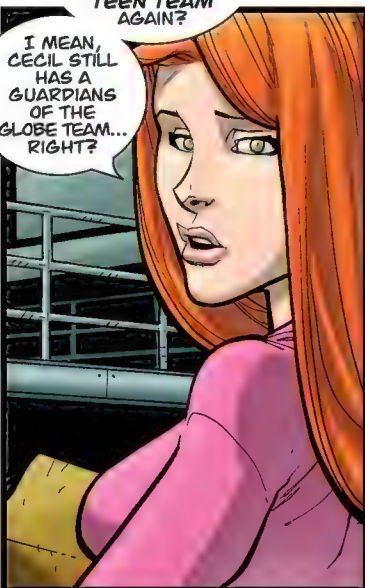
ARE YOU
KIDDING?
THIS PLACE
IS SWEET.

I DON'T
SEE ANY
REASON NOT
TO USE IT--IT'S
COMPLETELY
ADEQUATE
FOR OUR
PURPOSES.



IT IS A
COOL BASE,
JUST SEEMS LIKE
A BIT OF A STEP
DOWN, THAT'S ALL.
ARE YOU GOING TO
GO BY THE
TEEN TEAM
AGAIN?

I MEAN,
CECIL STILL
HAS A
GUARDIANS
OF THE
GLOBE TEAM...
RIGHT?



YEAH, I EXPECTED
MORE FROM KATE...
AND I CAN'T BELIEVE
SHAPESMITH STAYED
TOO--AFTER SEEING
WHAT CECIL DID TO
INVINCIBLE.

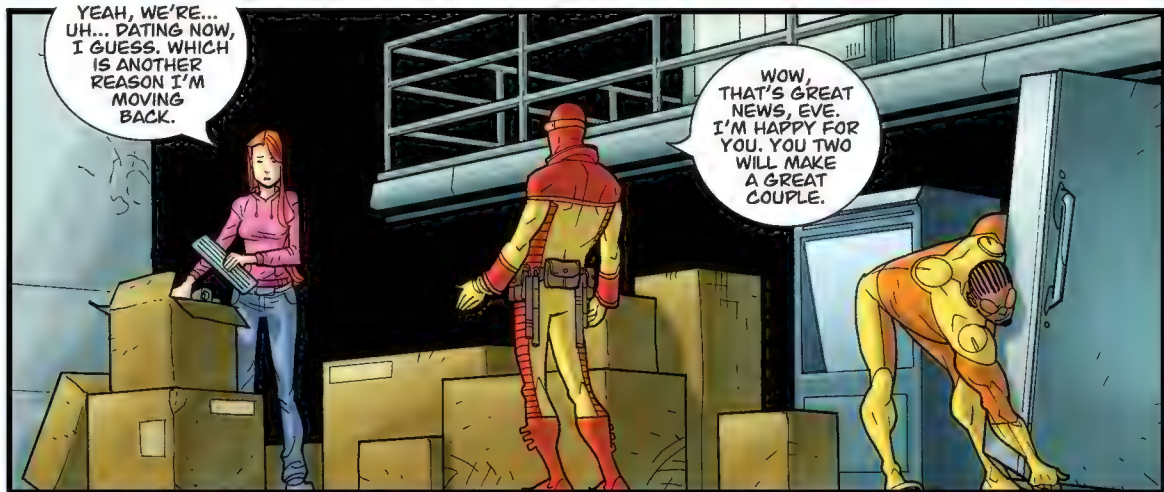
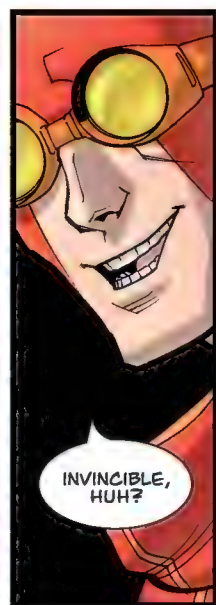
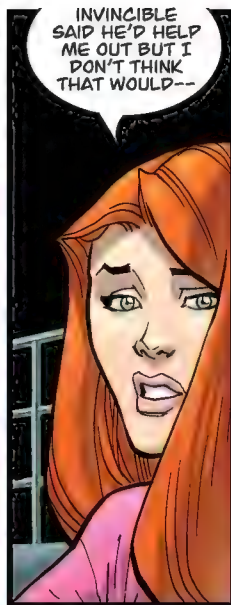
WE'RE
STILL
UNDECIDED
ON A NEW NAME.
I'VE GOT SOME
IDEAS... BUT
NOBODY LIKES
THEM.



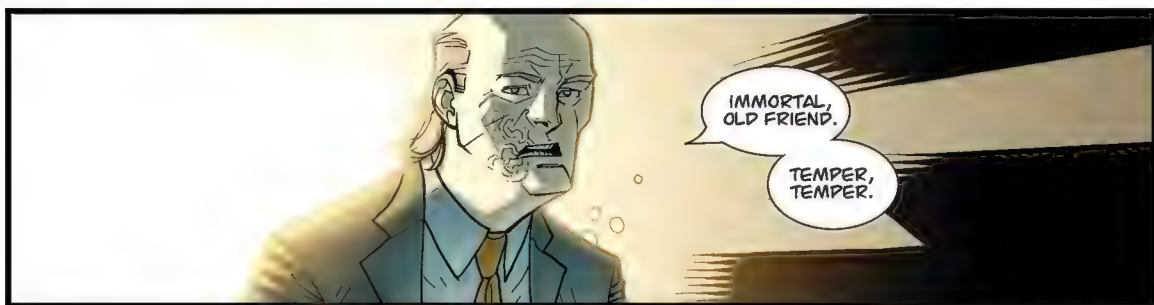
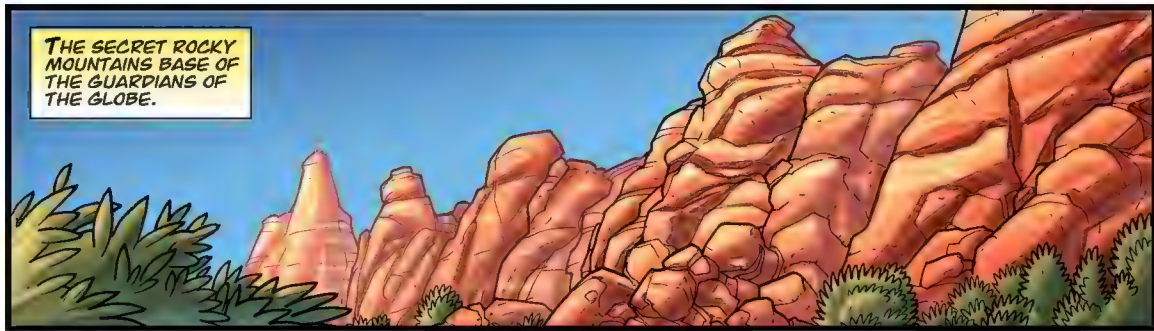
WE SURE
AS HELL AIN'T
GOING BY "THE
TEEN TEAM." AT
LEAST, NOT IF YOU
WANT ME ON
THE TEAM.

I BARELY
REMEMBER BEING
A TEENAGER--AND
JUST BEING AROUND
YOU KIDS MAKES ME FEEL
OLD ENOUGH AS IT IS.





THE SECRET ROCKY MOUNTAINS BASE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE.





LET'S ALL
TAKE A SECOND
TO WELCOME
DARKWING, THE
NEWEST MEMBER
OF THE
GUARDIANS
OF THE
GLOBE.

I'M
HAPPY TO
SERVE.



IT'S GOOD
TO HAVE YOU
ON BOARD,
KID.



IT'S AN
HONOR TO
HAVE THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO WORK ALONG-
SIDE YOU, SIR. I
ONLY HOPE I CAN
BE AS USEFUL AS
MY MENTOR
WAS, WHEN HE
WAS ON THIS
TEAM.



IF YOUR
PERFORMANCE
AGAINST DOC
SEISMIC WAS ANY
INDICATION--YOU'LL
SURPASS THE
ORIGINAL
DARKWING IN
NO TIME.



WHO
IS HE
AGAIN?

≡SIGH≡

THE SKYSCRAPER
HEADQUARTERS
OF TITAN.

THIS IS
NOT GOING
TO BE
EASY.

REGARDLESS, I FEEL
THE NEED TO REMIND
YOU THAT THE CLOCK IS
TICKING. MR. LIU IS A
HIGH-RANKING AND VERY
POWERFUL MEMBER OF THE
ORDER. HIS AGENT MULTI-
PAUL IS STILL IMPRISONED--
DESPITE HIS REQUEST
FOR YOU TO REMEDY
THAT.

YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
IN THE ORDER
IS NOT SET IN
STONE--IT WOULD
NOT TAKE MUCH
FOR THEM TO
ASK FOR YOUR
REMOVAL
AND--

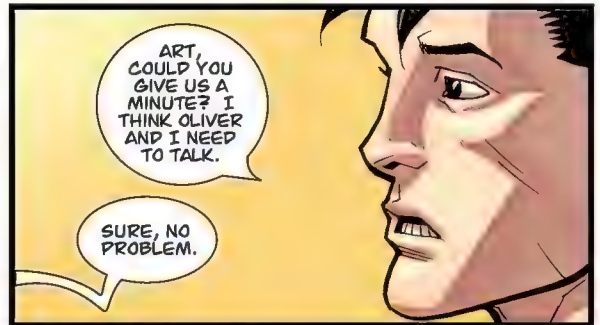
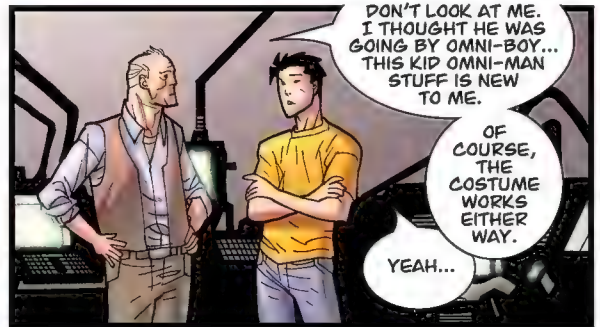
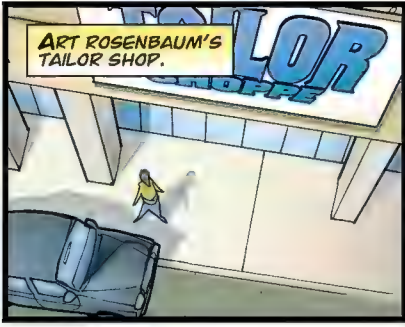
DO NOT ASSUME
I'M AS BLIND AS
MACHINE HEAD
WAS TO YOUR
TREACHEROUS
WAYS.

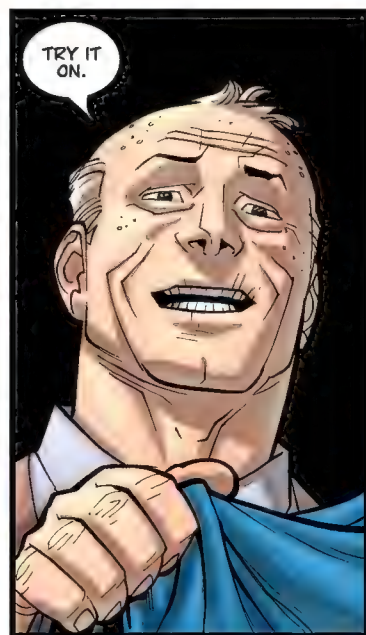
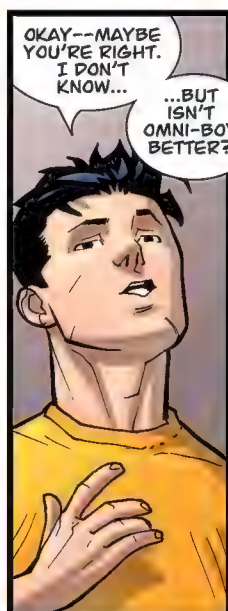
I WON'T
BE SO EASILY
OVERTAKEN.

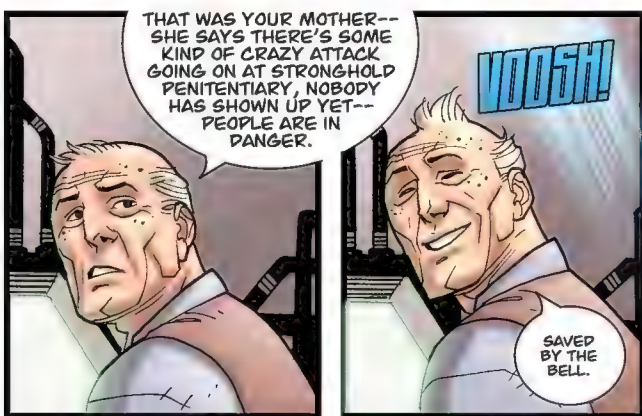
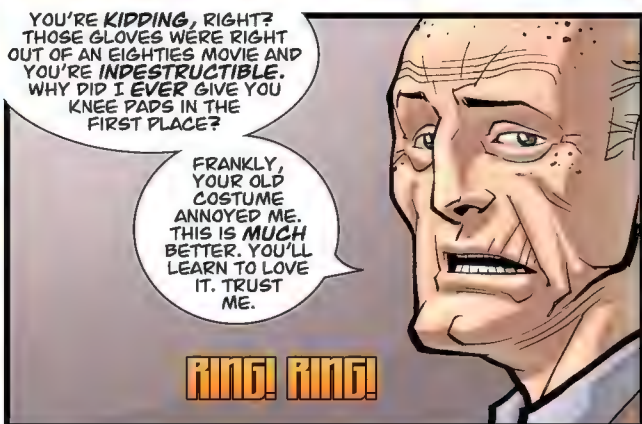
KRROOOOM!!!

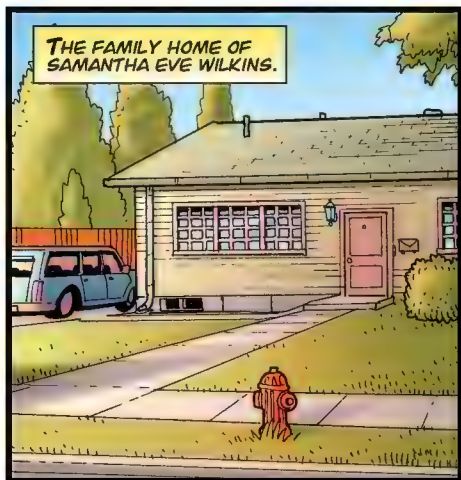
U--
UNDERSTOOD.

I
THOUGHT
SO.





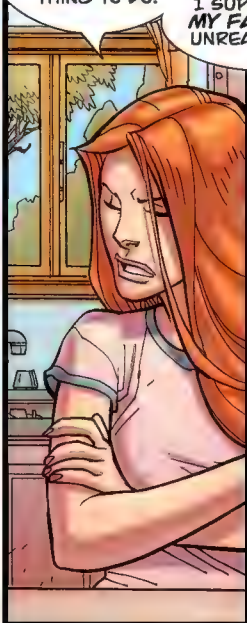




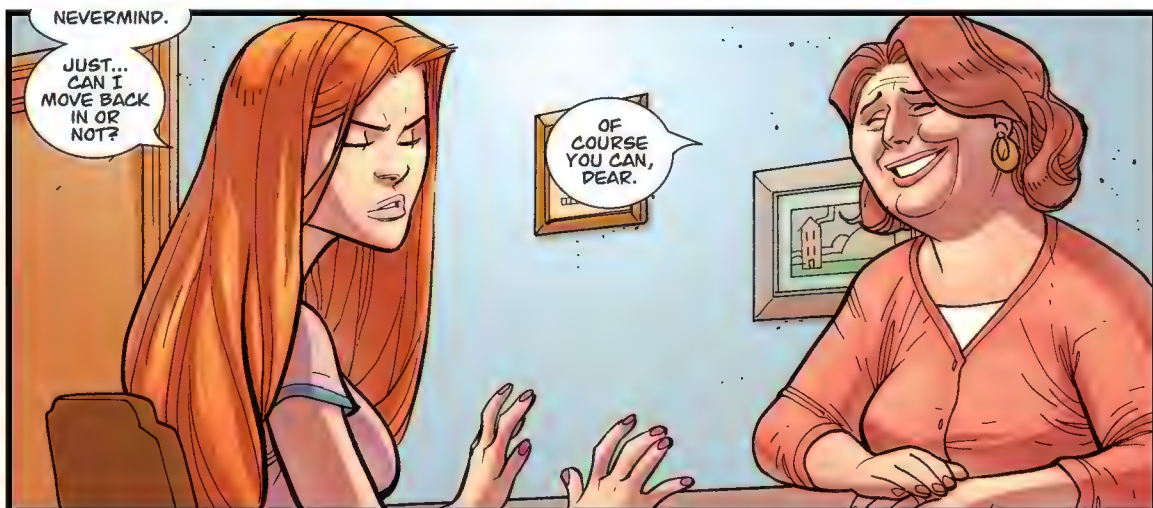
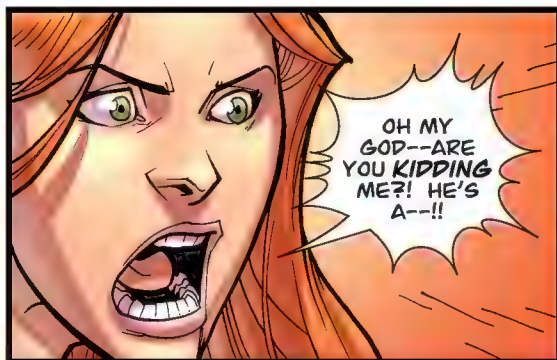
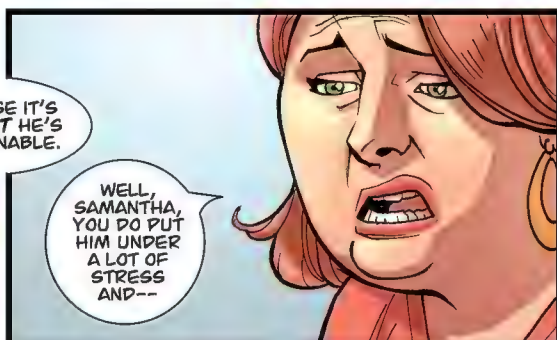
I'M SORRY, DEAR. HE'S JUST STILL MAD OVER THAT NOTE. YOU DID MOVE ALL THE WAY AROUND THE WORLD AND TOLD US IN A NOTE.

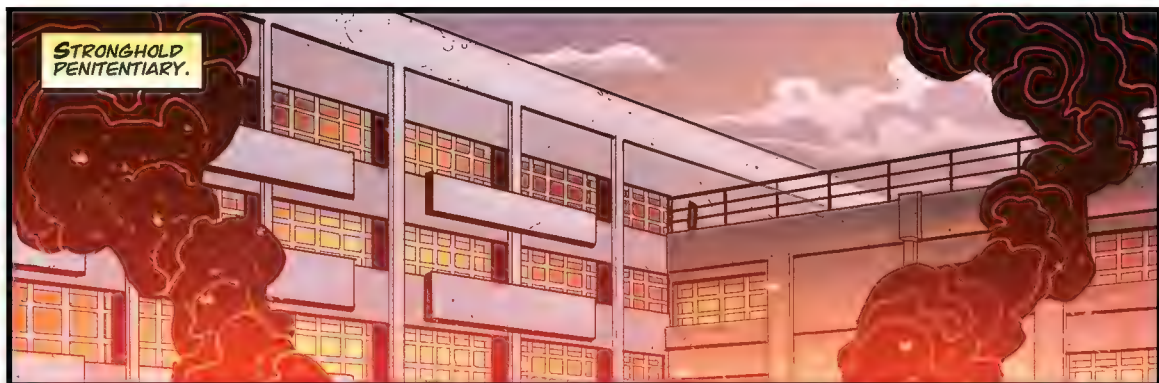


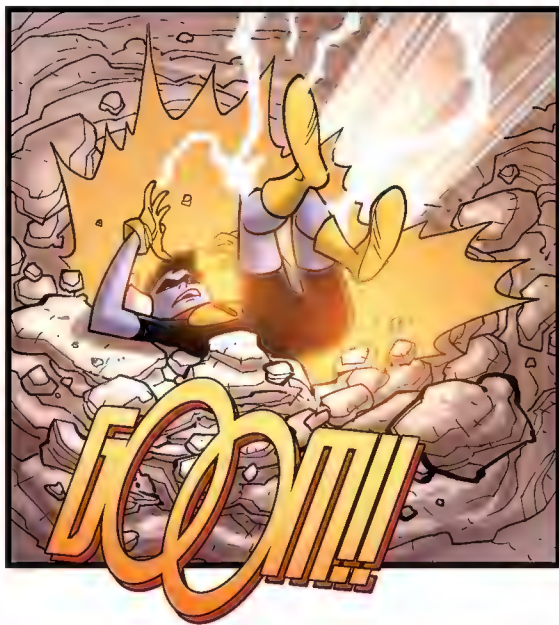
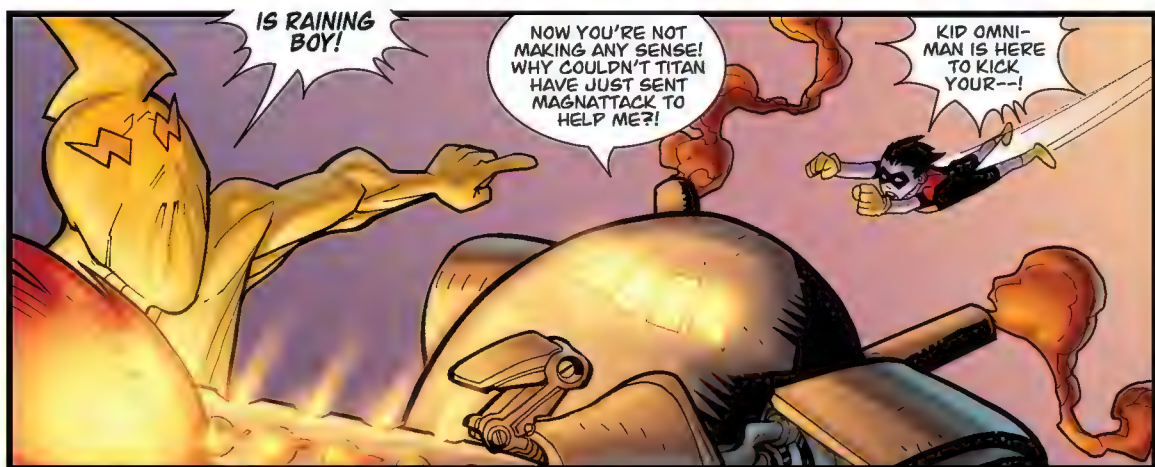
SORRY IF I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE GETTING YELLED AT FOR SOMETHING I KNEW WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.



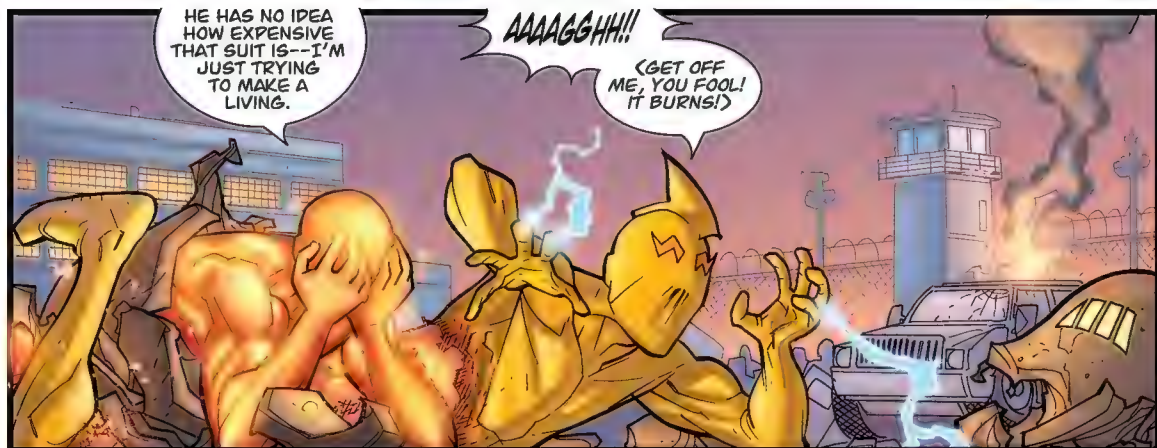
I SUPPOSE IT'S MY FAULT HE'S UNREASONABLE.

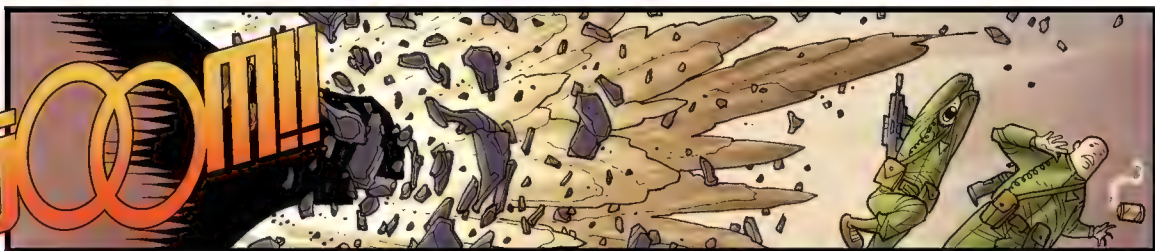
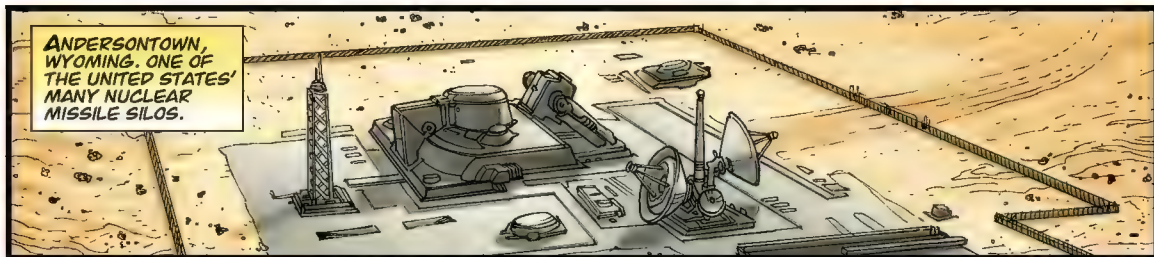




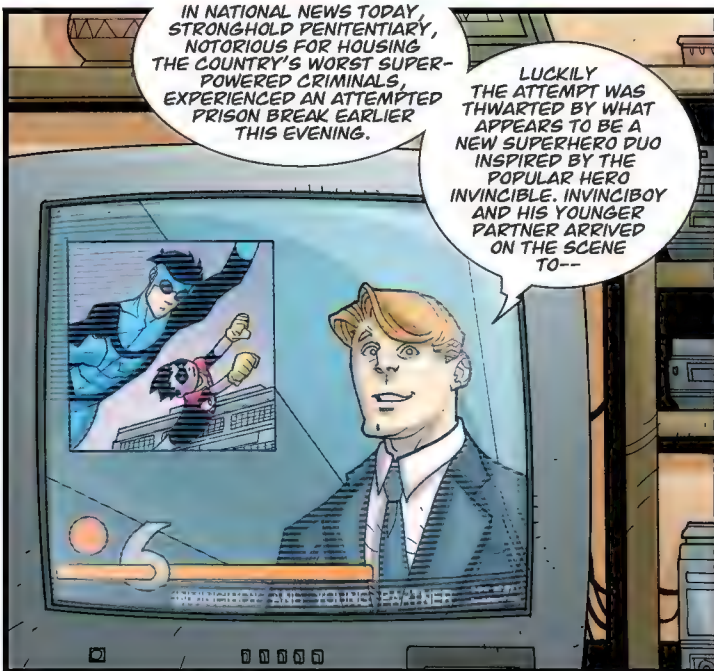
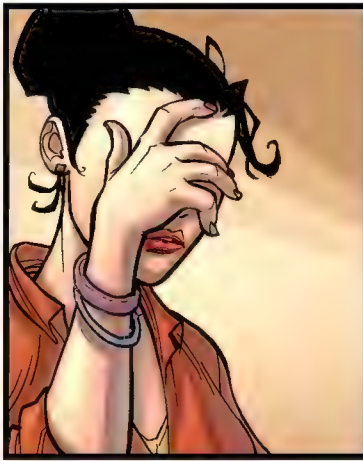
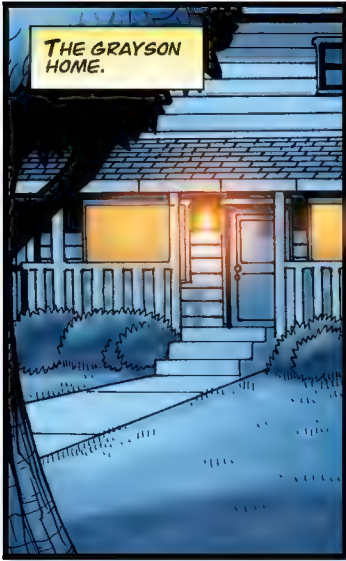


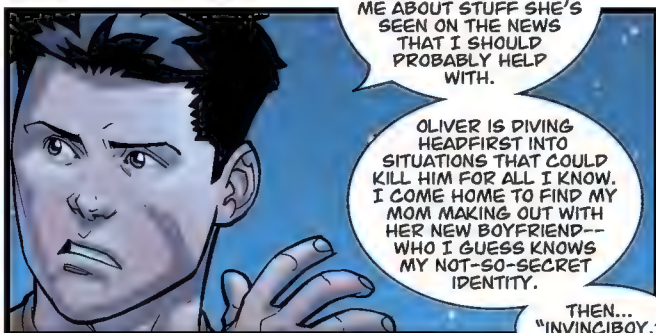
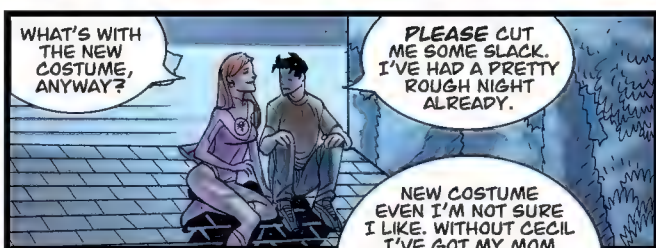




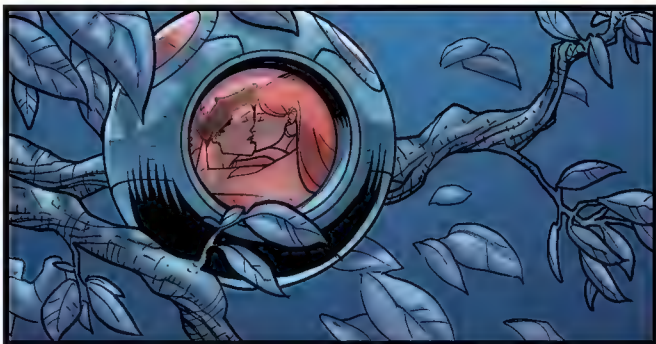
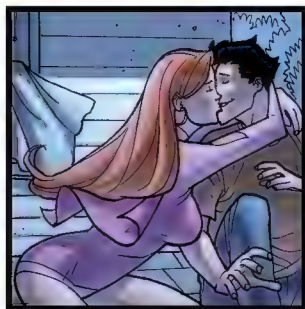








THEN...
"INVINCIBOY."





YOUNG
LOVE...

...HOW
INTERESTING.



CHAPTER 52



MARK! GET
DOWN HERE,
NOW!



WHAT IS IT? IS
EVERYTHING
OKAY?

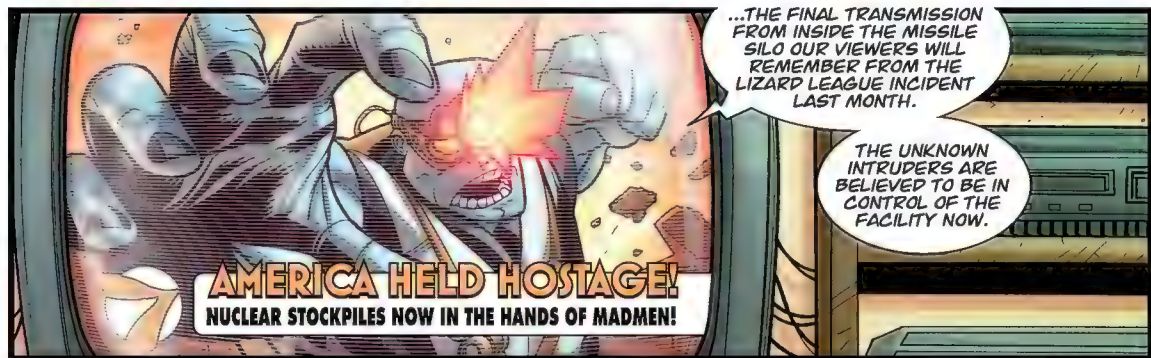
LOOK.



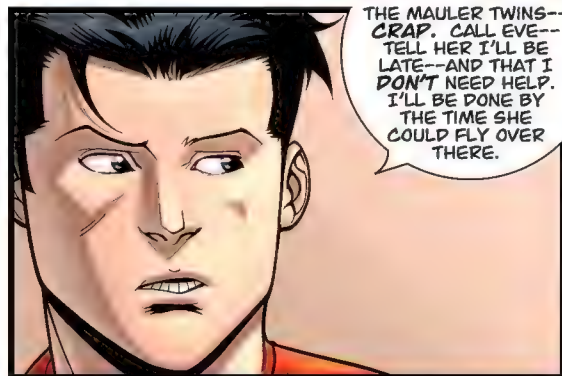
...THE FINAL TRANSMISSION
FROM INSIDE THE MISSILE
SILO OUR VIEWERS WILL
REMEMBER FROM THE
LIZARD LEAGUE INCIDENT
LAST MONTH.

THE UNKNOWN
INTRUDERS ARE
BELIEVED TO BE IN
CONTROL OF THE
FACILITY NOW.

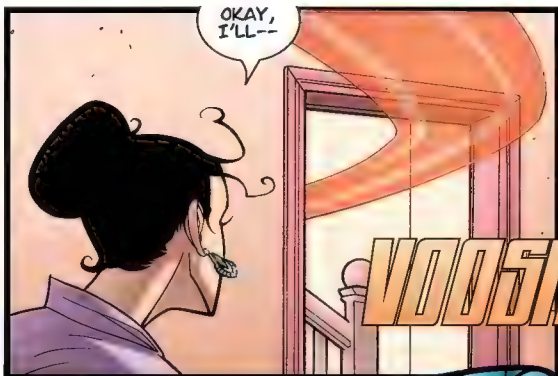
AMERICA HELD HOSTAGE!
NUCLEAR STOCKPILES NOW IN THE HANDS OF MADMEN!



THE MAULER TWINS--
CRAP. CALL EVE--
TELL HER I'LL BE
LATE--AND THAT I
DON'T NEED HELP.
I'LL BE DONE BY
THE TIME SHE
COULD FLY OVER
THERE.



OKAY,
I'LL--



VOOSH!





I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED---

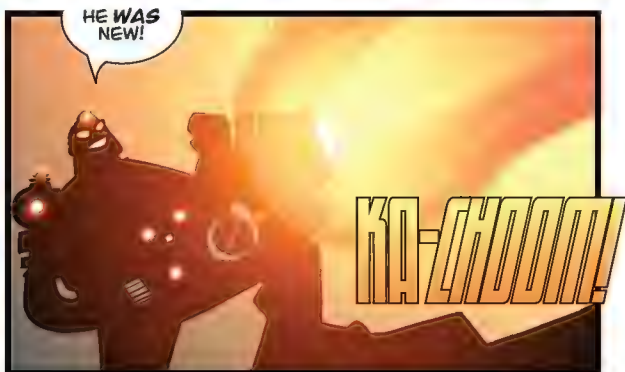
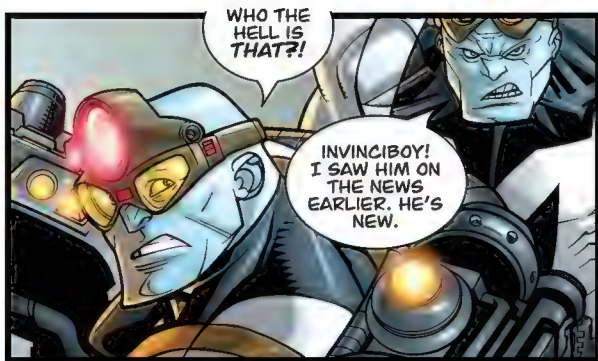
OF COURSE IT WORKED. WE BUILT THAT GUN. I TOLD YOU IT WOULD WORK.

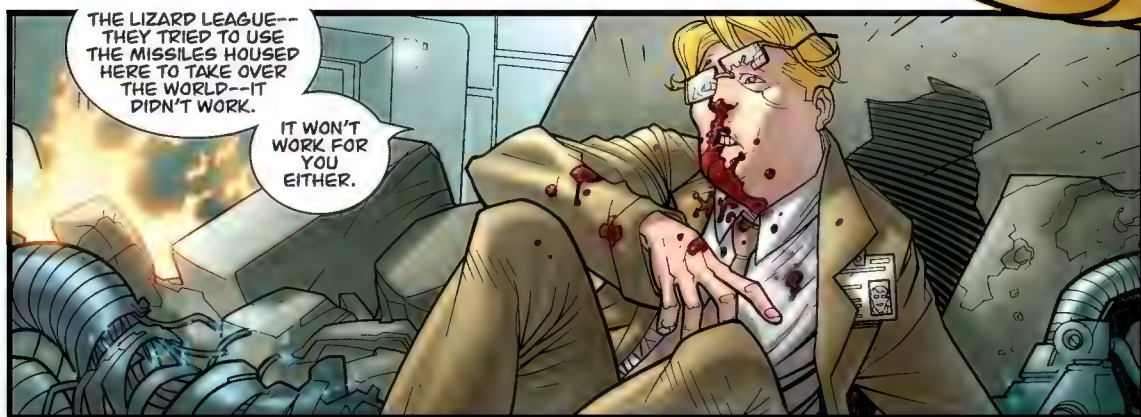
SO WELL. YOU CUT ME OFF. I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED SO WELL.

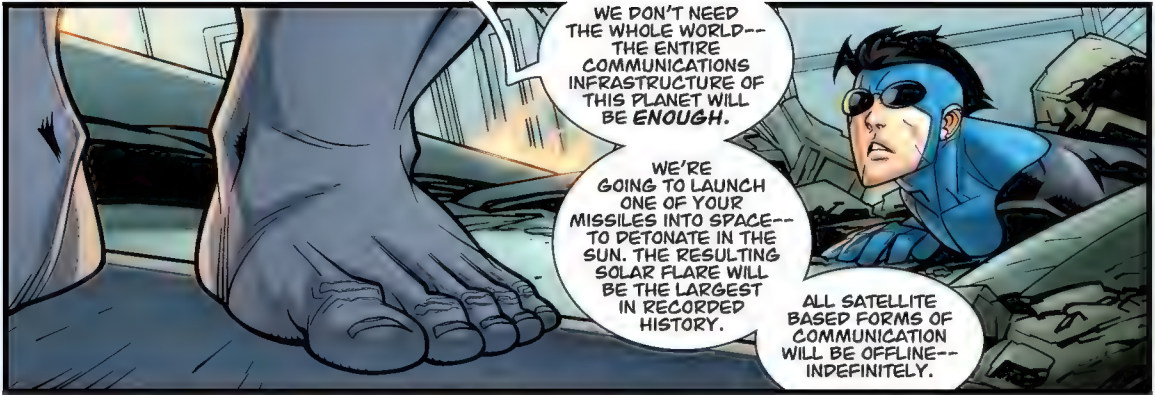
I TOLD YOU IT WOULD WORK THAT WELL.

I THINK I'M THE ORIGINAL CLONE. YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY SUFFERING FROM EXTENSIVE DEGRADATION.

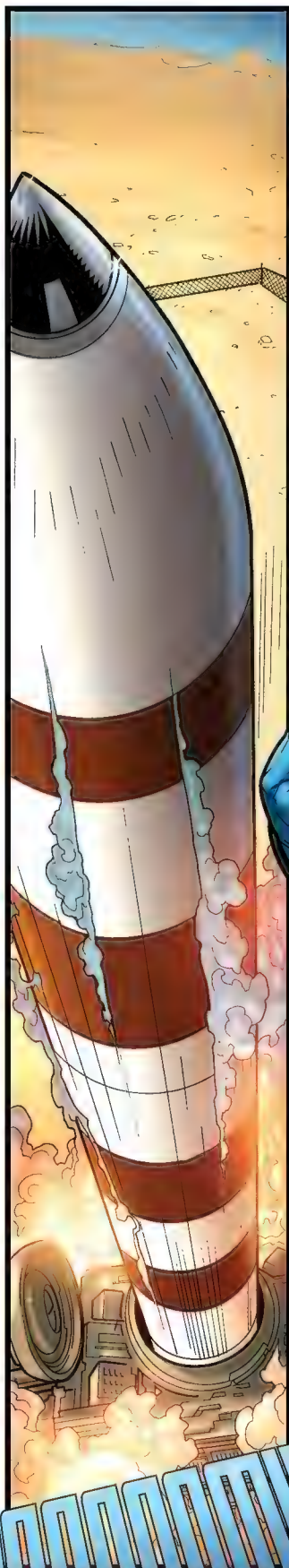
WON'T WORK. WHATEVER YOU'RE TRYING... SOMEONE WILL STOP YOU. SOMEONE---









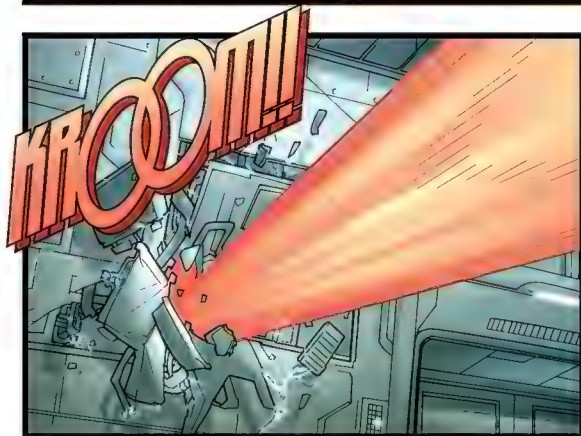


THEY'VE
FIRED THE
MISSILE!

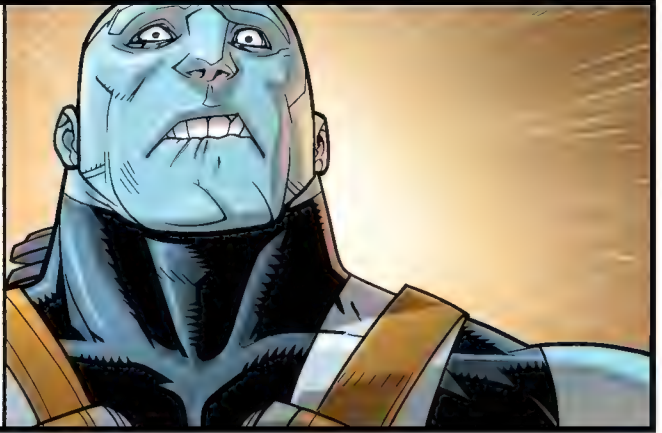
YOU CAN'T
FIGHT THESE
GUYS ALONE--
JUST RUN!

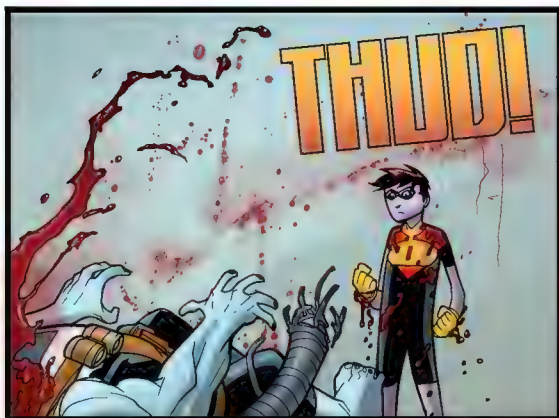
I'M GOING
AFTER IT! GET
OUT OF HERE,
KID OMNI-
MAN!

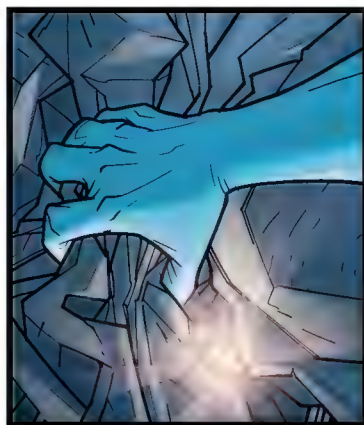
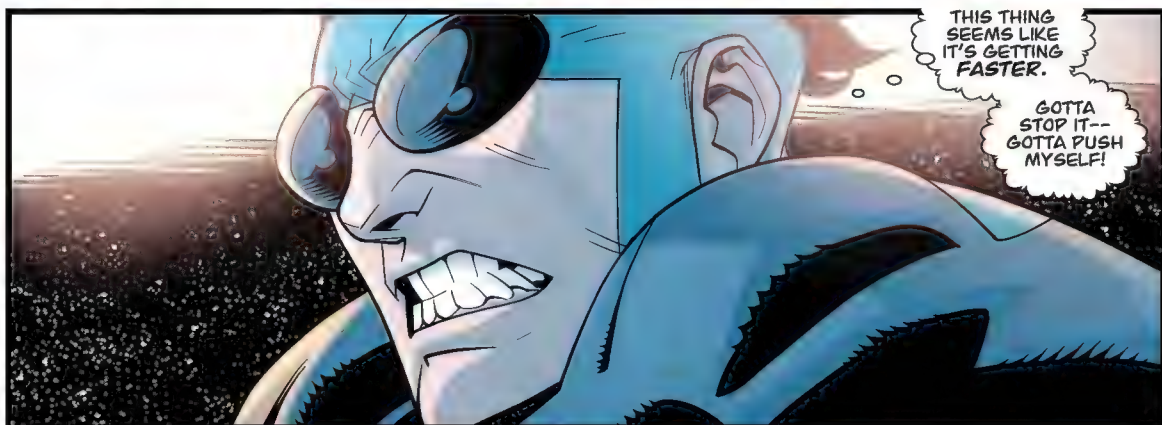
SHHHHHHHH!!
SHHHHHHHHHH!!





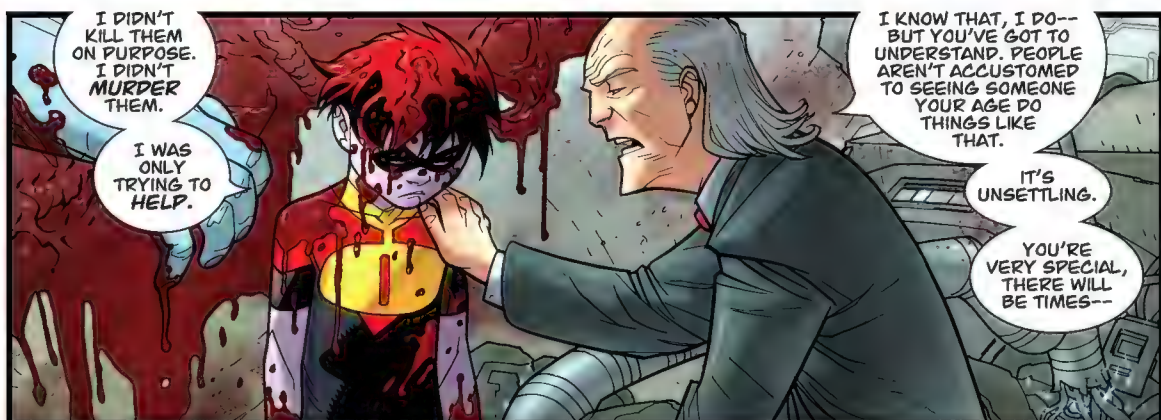


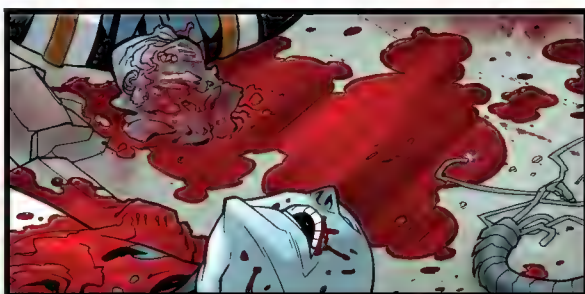
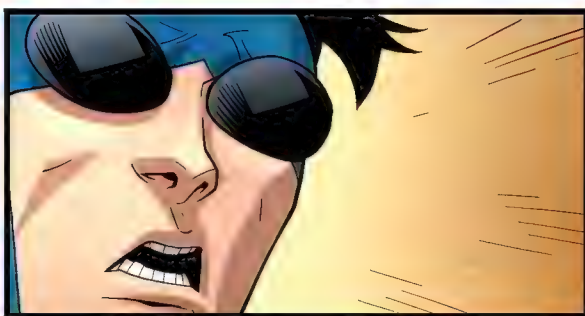


















PRECIOUS. HUMAN
LIFE ISN'T PRECIOUS.
NOT IN GENERAL--
NOT EVERYONE.

PEOPLE RISK
THEIR LIVES EVERY
DAY. THEY KILL EACH
OTHER. IF THEY DON'T
THINK THEIR LIVES
ARE IMPORTANT, WHY
SHOULD I?

MOST OF
THEM ARE UTTERLY
INSIGNIFICANT.

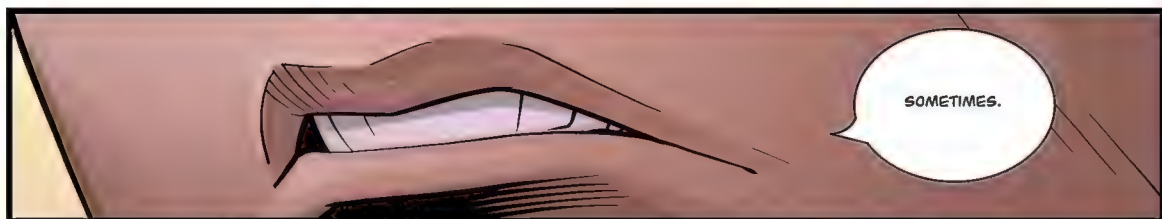
YOU
SOUND
LIKE
DAD.

SO? WHY IS THAT BAD?
WAS HE SO WRONG? DID
NOTHING HE SAID MAKE
SENSE TO YOU--EVEN
ON A SMALL
LEVEL?

HAVE YOU
EVER THOUGHT
THAT MAYBE OUR
FATHER WAS
RIGHT?



...

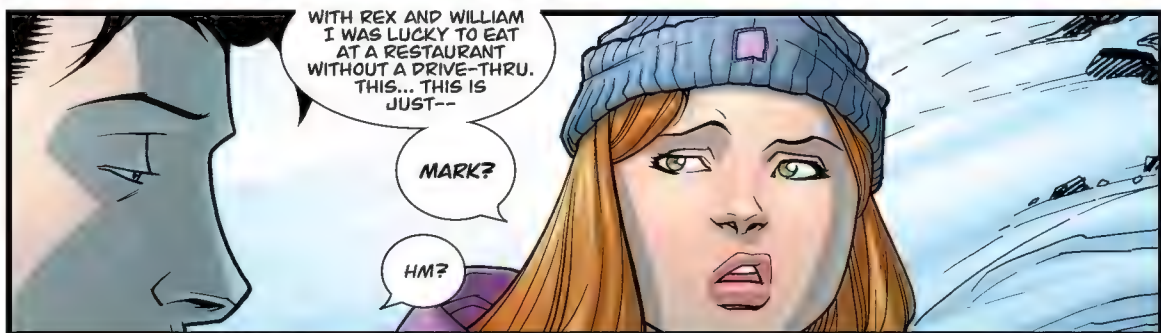
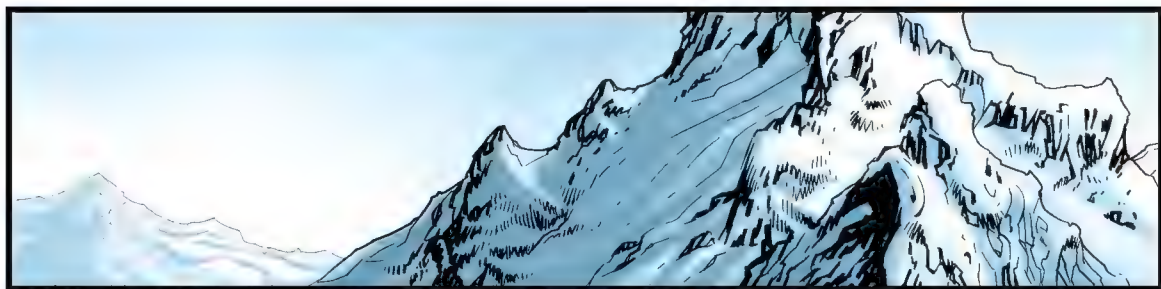


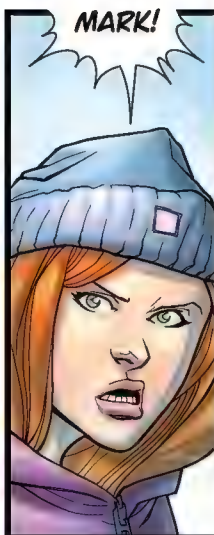
SOMETIMES.



CHAPTER 53







WHAT? NO. I CAN'T DO THAT. THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE SPECIAL. I HATE THAT I'VE RUINED THE MOMENT AS MUCH AS I HAVE ALREADY.

NO WAY.



WHOA--I'M NOT SOME STUPID GIRL YOU HAVE TO BEND OVER BACKWARDS FOR TO KEEP HAPPY. I'M ATOM FRICKIN' EVE-- I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH.

LET'S GO.

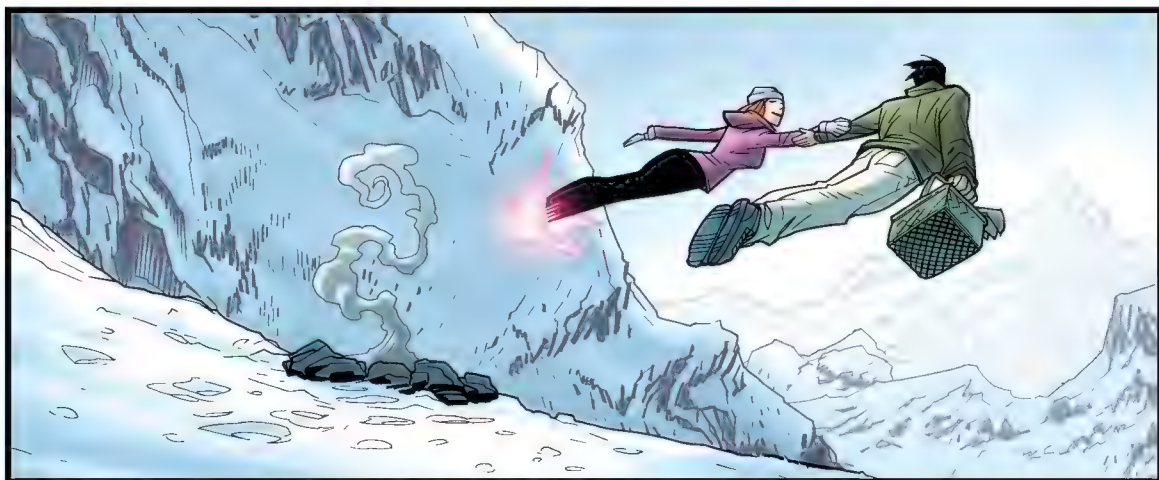
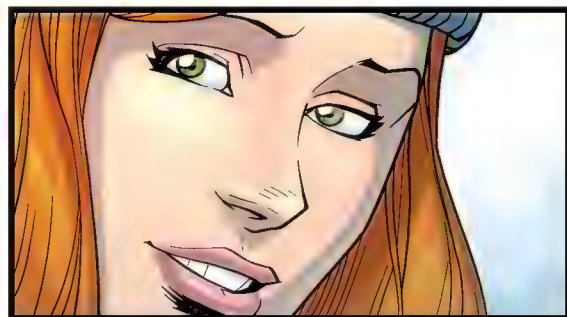
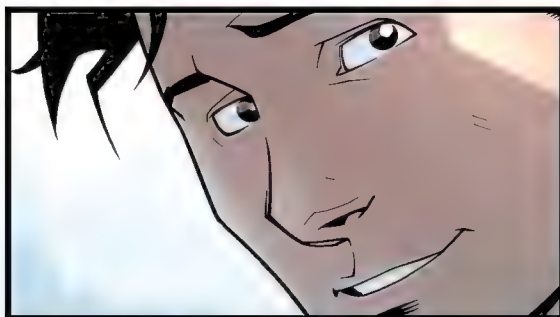
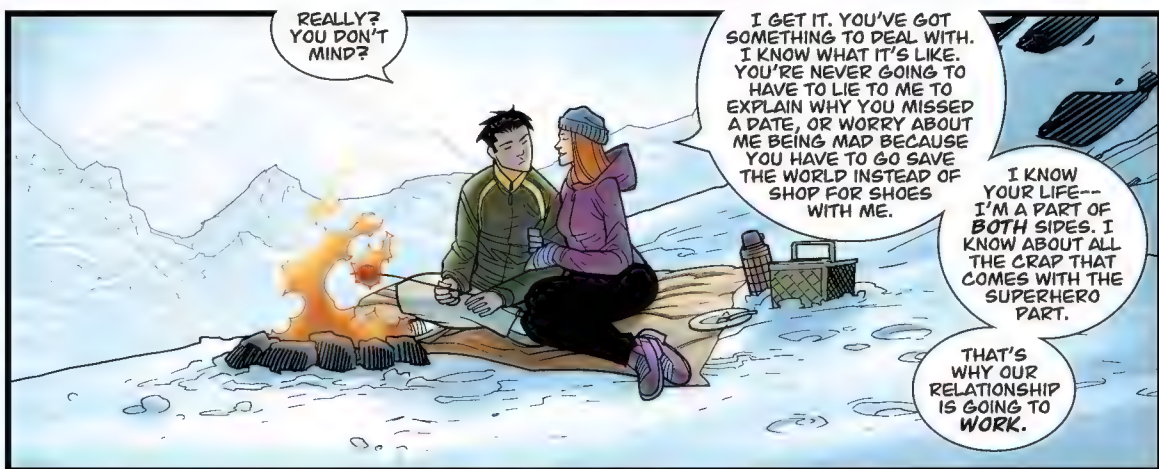


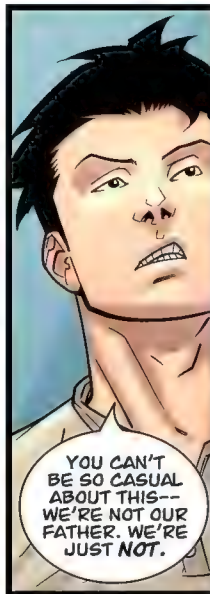
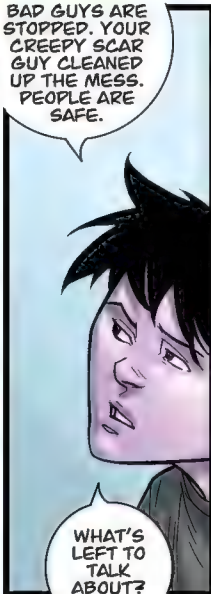
REALLY? YOU DON'T MIND?

I GET IT. YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO DEAL WITH. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE. YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO HAVE TO LIE TO ME TO EXPLAIN WHY YOU MISSED A DATE, OR WORRY ABOUT ME BEING MAD BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO GO SAVE THE WORLD INSTEAD OF SHOP FOR SHOES WITH ME.

I KNOW YOUR LIFE-- I'M A PART OF BOTH SIDES. I KNOW ABOUT ALL THE CRAP THAT COMES WITH THE SUPERHERO PART.

THAT'S WHY OUR RELATIONSHIP IS GOING TO WORK.





I'M NOT FROM THIS PLANET, MARK. I'M NOT EVEN PARTIALLY HUMAN. I DON'T RELATE TO THESE PEOPLE, I DON'T UNDERSTAND THESE PEOPLE AND IN ALL BUT A FEW CASES I DON'T LIKE THESE PEOPLE.

WHERE I COME FROM, THE GREATER GOOD AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE ARE VASTLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE INDIVIDUAL. MY PEOPLE LIVED SUCH A SHORT TIME--LIFE WAS MEANT TO IMPROVE LIFE FOR OTHERS.

EVERYONE HERE IS SO SELFISH AND SELF-CENTERED. IT'S DISGUSTING.

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. YOU'VE LIVED HERE MUCH LONGER THAN YOU EVER LIVED WITH YOUR MOTHER'S PEOPLE.

YOU WERE JUST A BABY--

YOU KNOW I HAVE COMPLETE RECOLLECTION OF EVERYTHING I'VE EXPERIENCED IN MY LIFE. I CAN REMEMBER CONVERSATIONS HELD DURING MY BIRTH.

I CAN--

STOP IT-- JUST STOP IT!

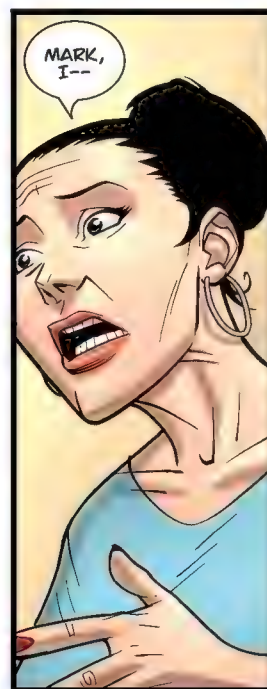
YOU'RE A CHILD--YOU'RE JUST A KID! YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU THINK--WHAT YOU FEEL! YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO BE TALKING LIKE THIS!

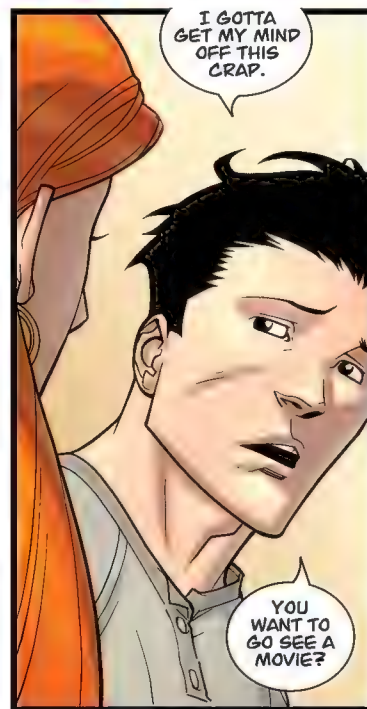
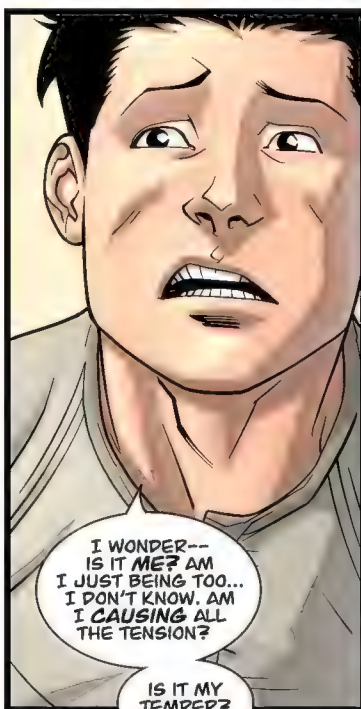
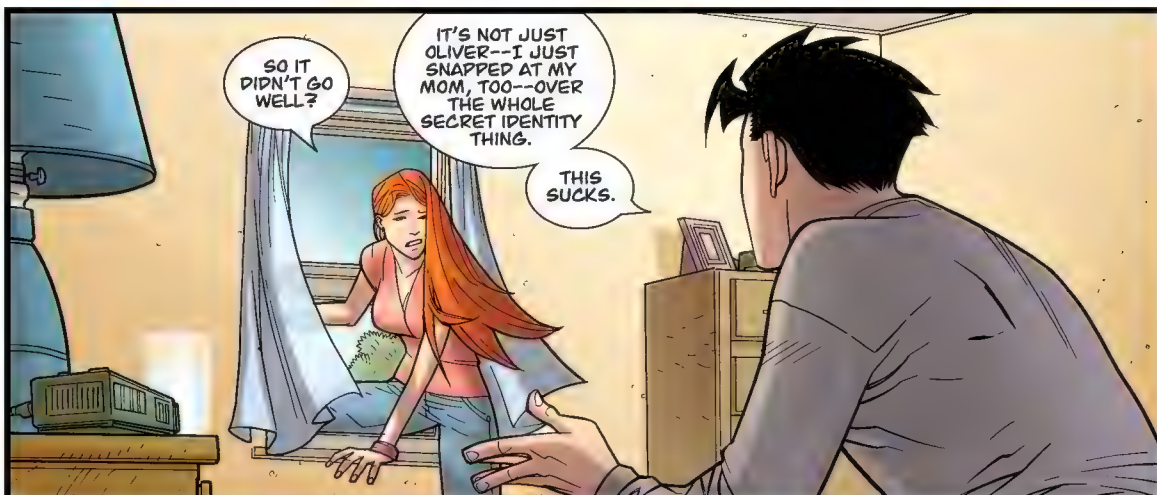
YOUR MIND ISN'T MADE UP ON THESE PEOPLE--ALMOST EVERYTHING YOU KNOW IS FROM READING BOOKS AND WATCHING TV. THAT'S RIDICULOUS. YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!

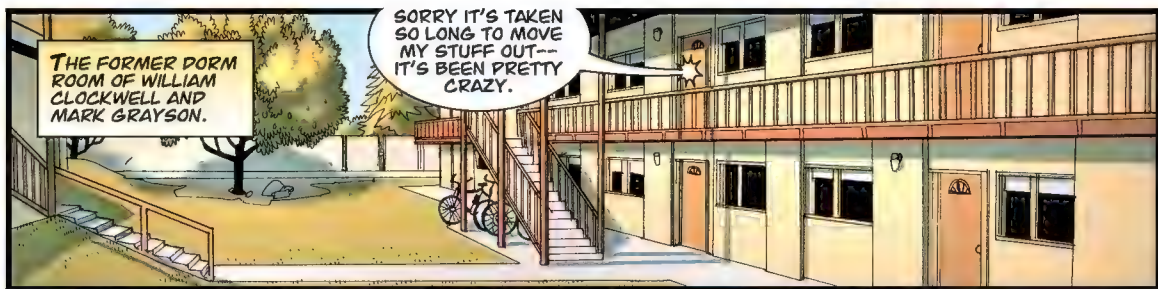
MARK, I RESPECTFULLY DISAGREE. I'VE HAD THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO--

NO, JUST-- STOP. STOP.

WE'LL CONTINUE THIS LATER.







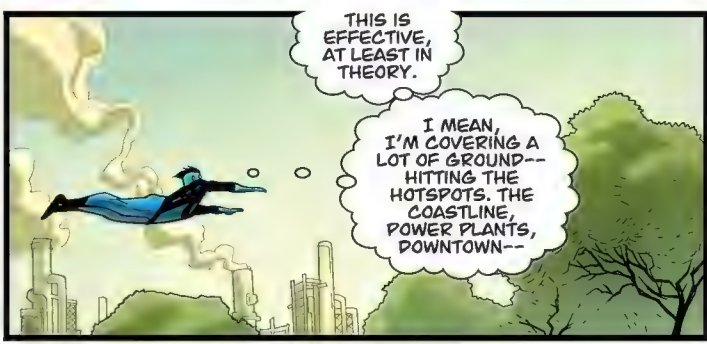


THIS SUCKS.



CECIL WAS OUT OF LINE--AND I'M GLAD TO BE RID OF HIM, BUT AT LEAST WITH HIM, I COULD READ A BOOK UNTIL I GOT THE CALL.

PATROLLING-- SHEESH.



THIS IS EFFECTIVE, AT LEAST IN THEORY.

I MEAN, I'M COVERING A LOT OF GROUND-- HITTING THE HOTSPOTS. THE COASTLINE, POWER PLANTS, DOWNTOWN--



STRONGHOLD PENITENTIARY.

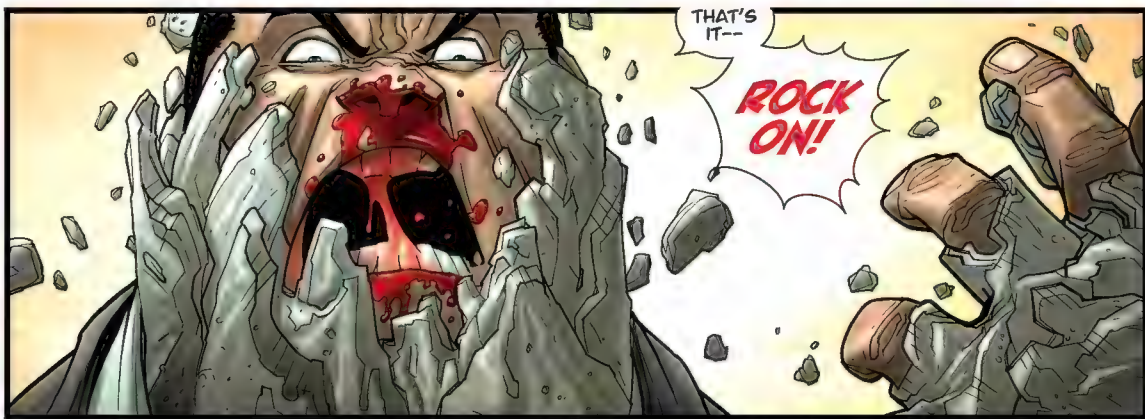
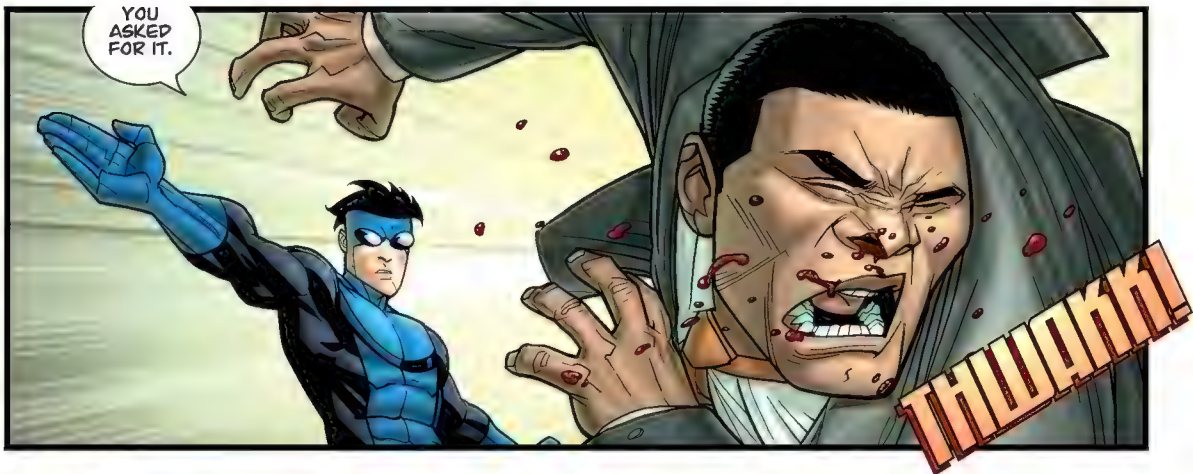


HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, TITAN. I HEARD ALL ABOUT YOU TAKING OVER MACHINE HEAD'S ORGANIZATION AFTER I HELPED YOU FIGHT HIM.

DID YOU REALLY THINK I WOULDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU?

STEP ASIDE, INVINCIBLE.



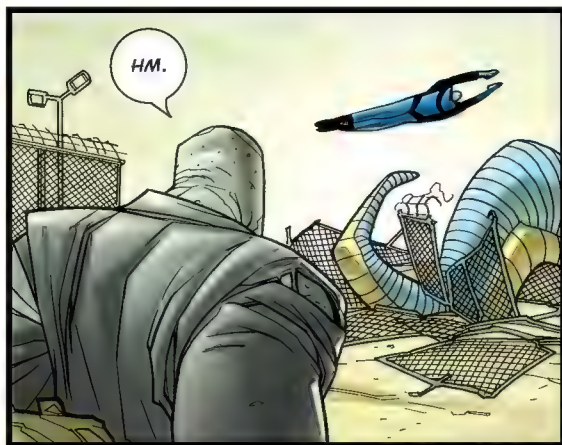
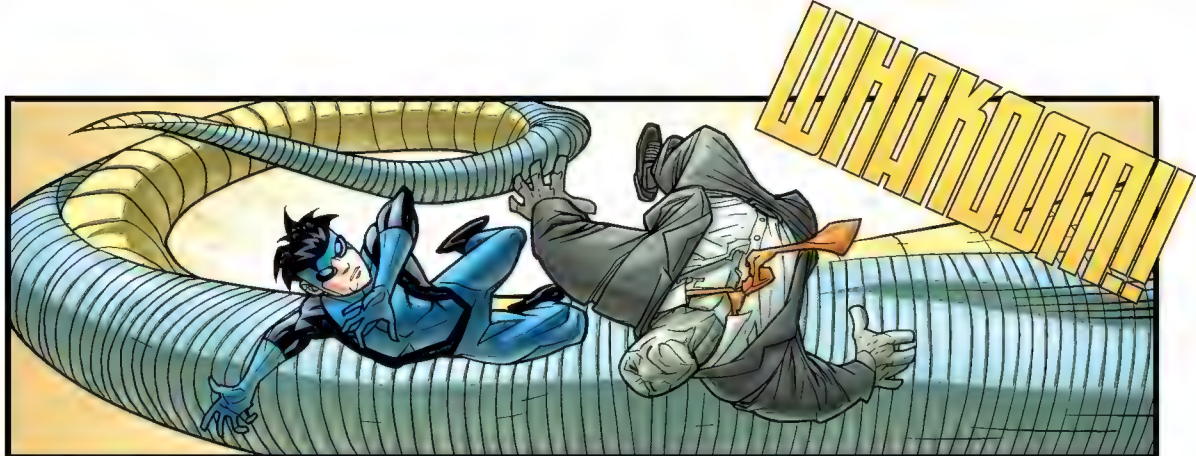


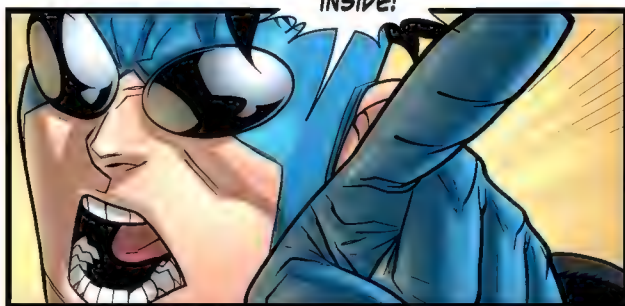
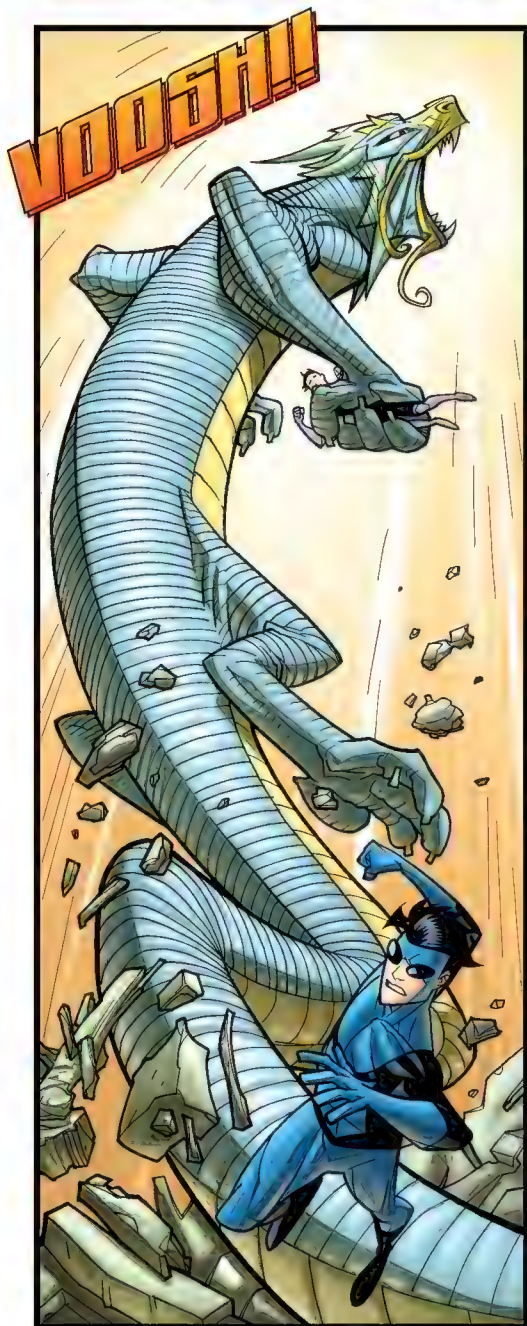
TITAN!

I'VE
WAITED
LONG
ENOUGH--
YOUR TIME
IS UP!



WROKKK-DOM!







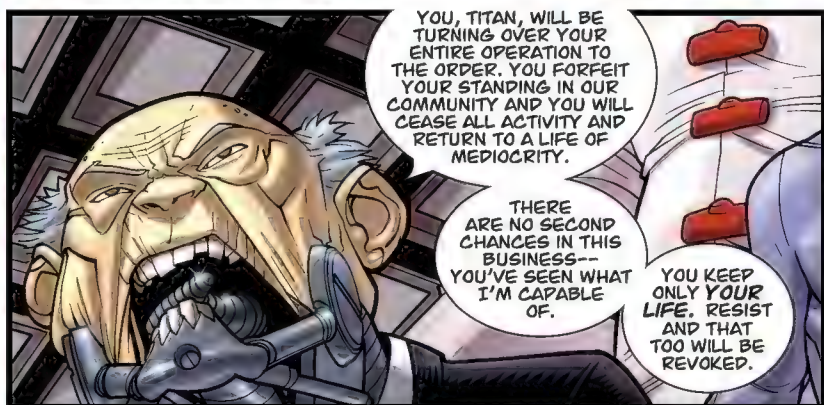
LATER.

WHAT?!

YOU DID NOT RECOGNIZE MY SOUL PROJECTION THEN? IT WAS I WHO DID WHAT YOU COULD NOT. MY AGENT IS FREE--AND YOU HAVE FAILED ME AND FAILED THE ORDER.

CONSIDER YOUR MEMBERSHIP REVOKED.

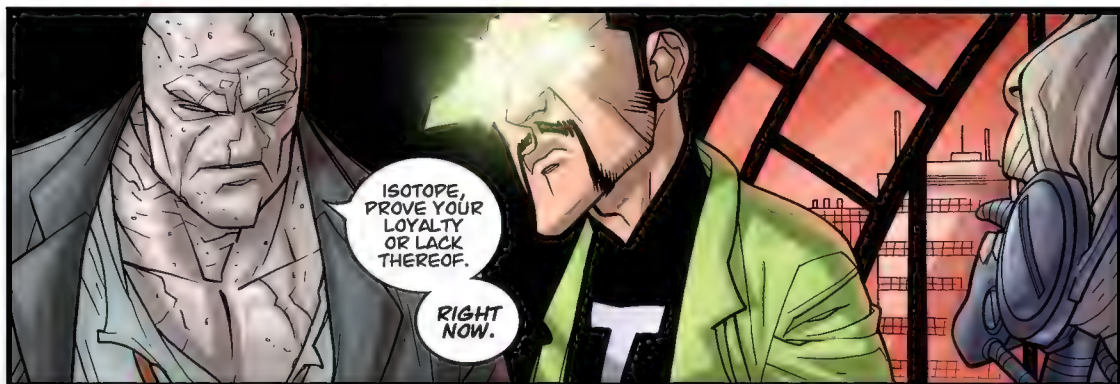
MISTER LIU, I--



YOU, TITAN, WILL BE TURNING OVER YOUR ENTIRE OPERATION TO THE ORDER. YOU FORFEIT YOUR STANDING IN OUR COMMUNITY AND YOU WILL CEASE ALL ACTIVITY AND RETURN TO A LIFE OF MEOCURITY.

THERE ARE NO SECOND CHANCES IN THIS BUSINESS-- YOU'VE SEEN WHAT I'M CAPABLE OF.

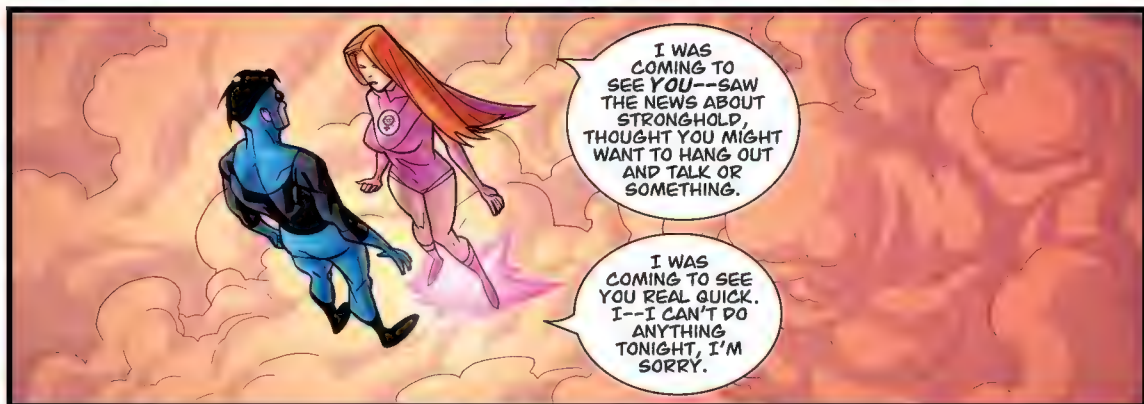
YOU KEEP ONLY YOUR LIFE. RESIST AND THAT TOO WILL BE REVOKED.

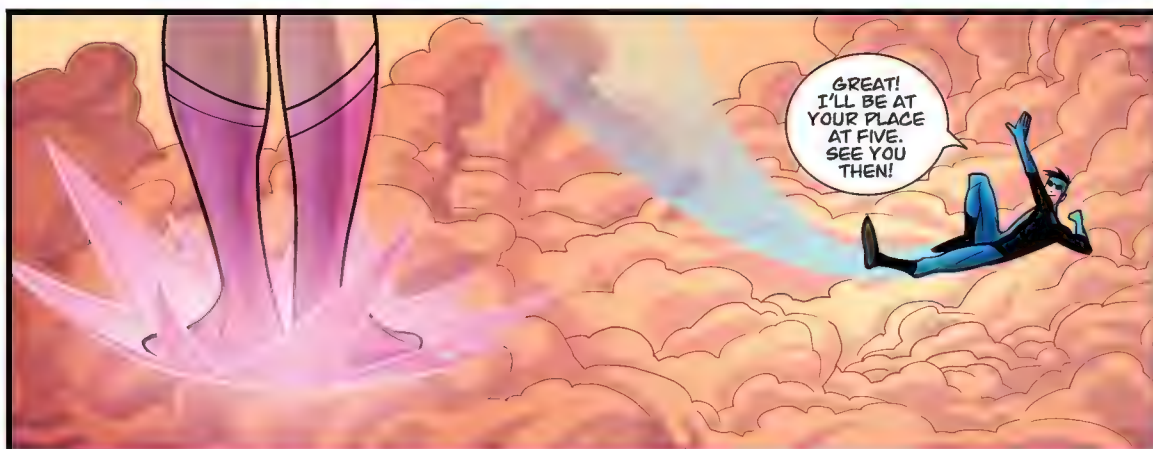
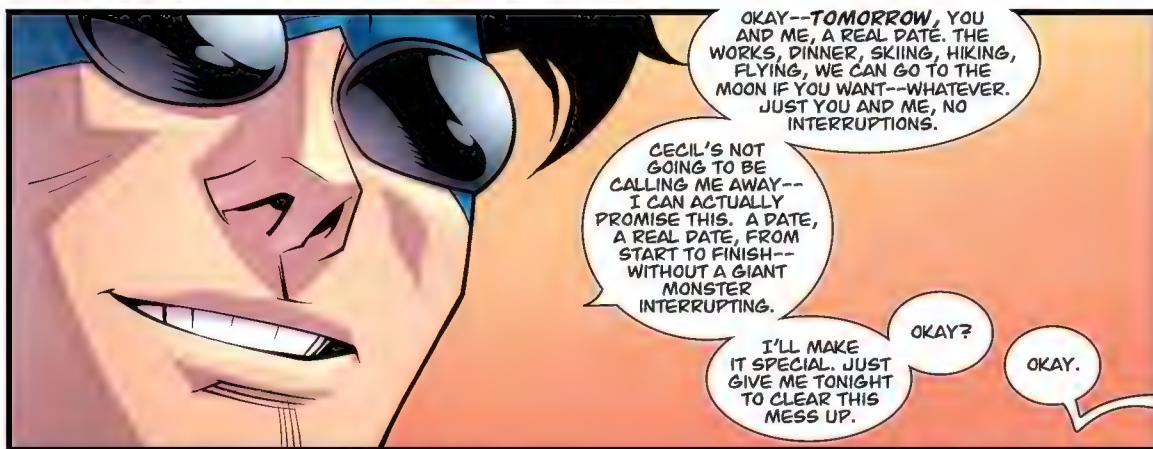
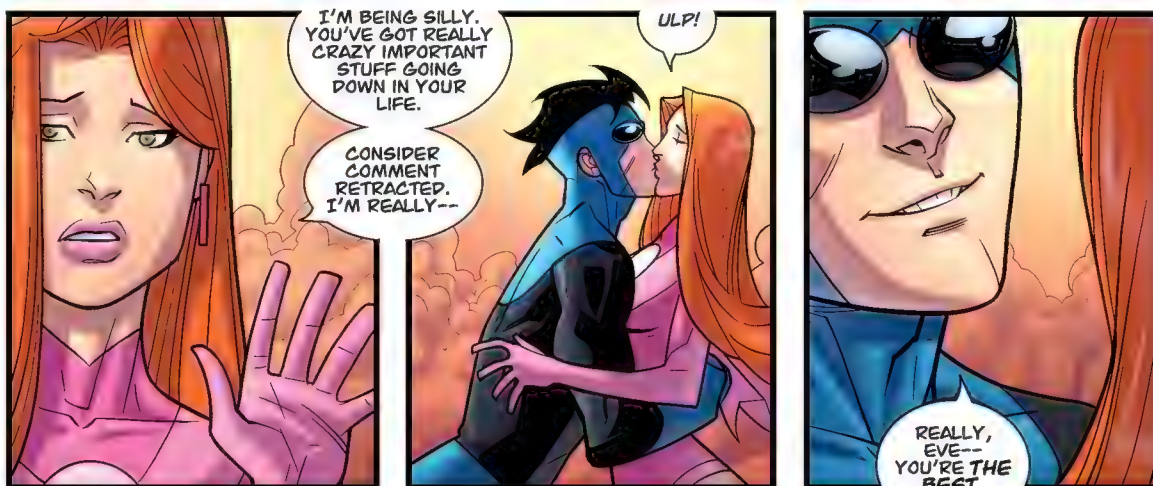


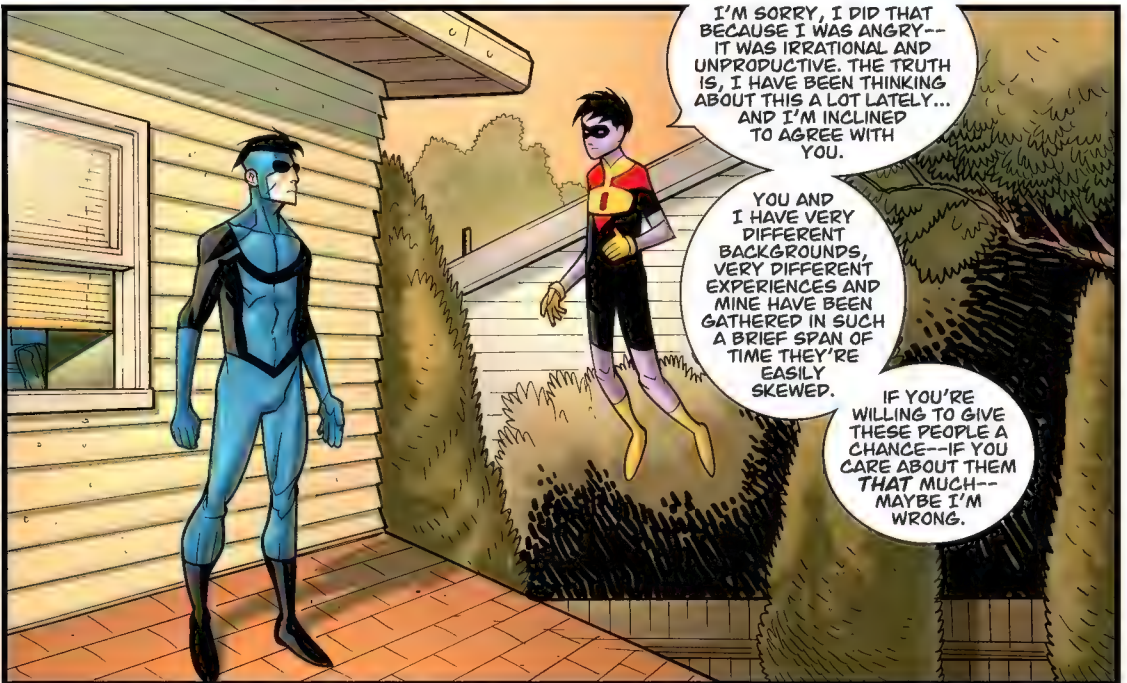
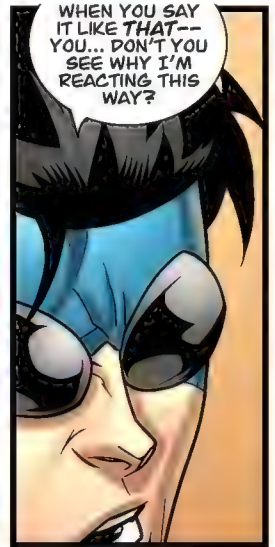
ISOTOPE, PROVE YOUR LOYALTY OR LACK THEREOF.

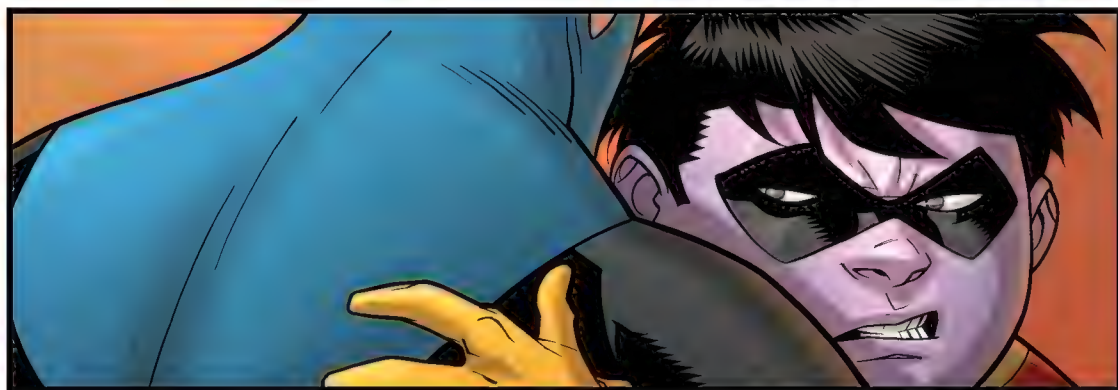
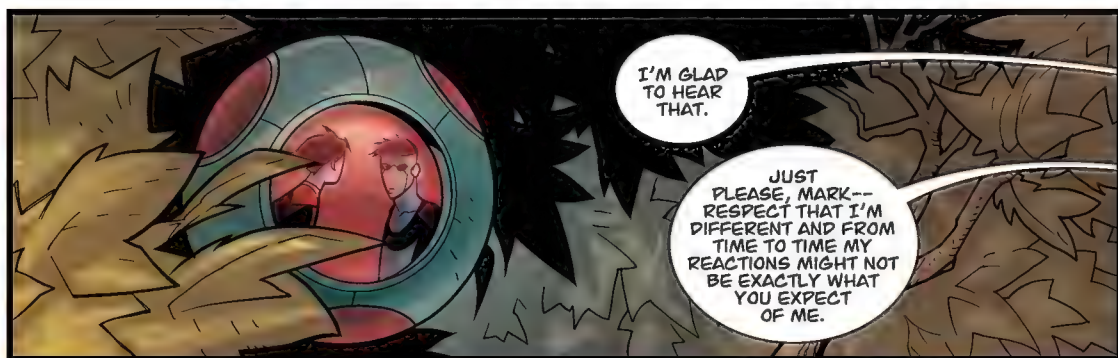
RIGHT NOW.







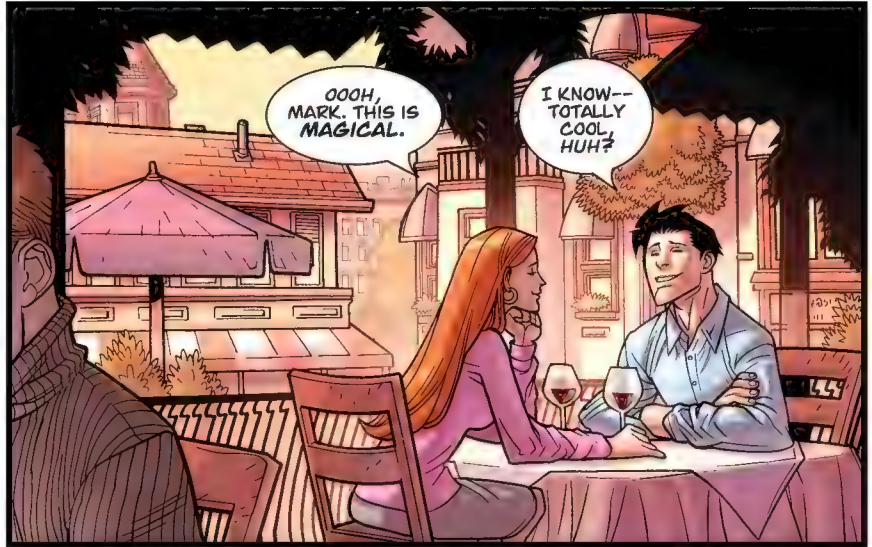
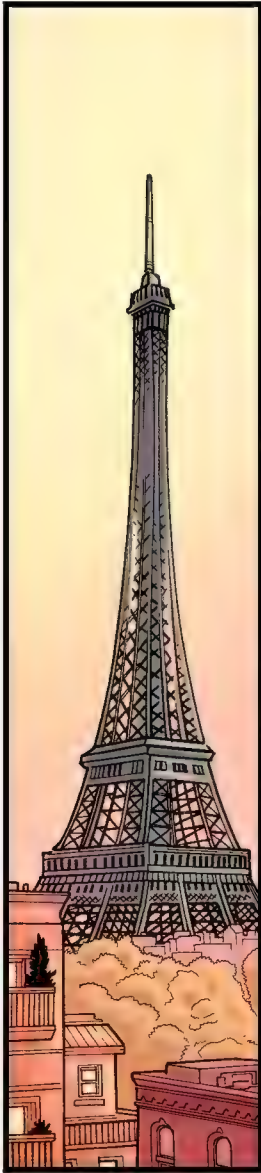






CHAPTER 54





OOOH,
MARK. THIS IS
MAGICAL.

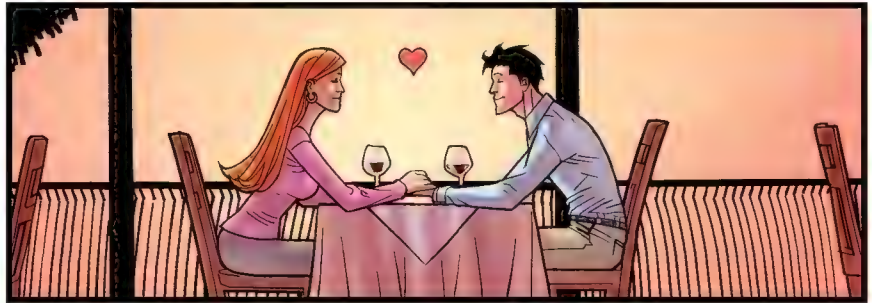
I KNOW--
TOTALLY
COOL,
HUH?



AND I'VE
GOT YOU ALL
TO MYSELF--NO
INTERRUPTIONS...



JUST LIKE
I PROMISED,
I'M OFFICIALLY
OFF DUTY.

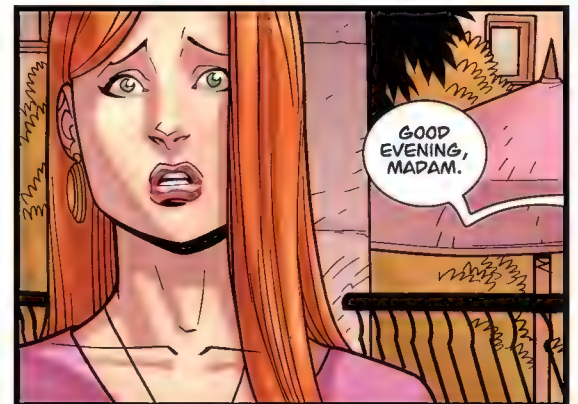
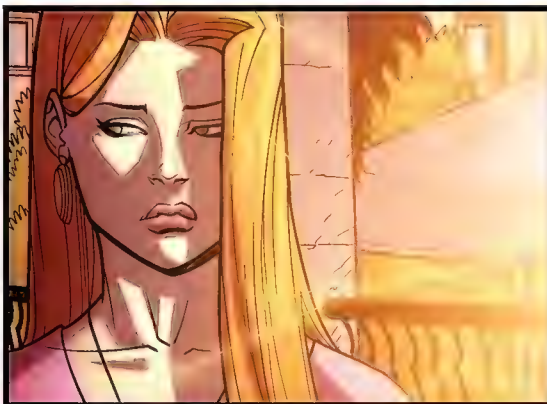


PLEASE TELL
ME THAT ISN'T A
GLOWING PORTAL
OPENING UP
NEXT TO OUR
TABLE.



YOU HAVE NO
IDEA HOW MUCH
I WISH I COULD
SAY THAT...







WELCOME
TO...

...THE
FUTURE!



OR AS WE
CALL IT--THE
PRESENT!

OUR FUTURE
IS WAY WORSE
THAN THIS ONE,
TRUST ME. WHICH
IS WHY WE REALLY
NEED YOUR
HELP!



SO--TELL ME WHAT
IT IS YOU NEED ME TO
DO. I REALLY NEED
TO GET BACK TO MY
DATE--AND PLEASE
DON'T TELL MY
GIRLFRIEND I WORE
MY COSTUME UNDER
MY CLOTHES.

DO YOU HAVE
A COMPARTMENT
ON THIS SLED I
COULD PUT
THESE IN?



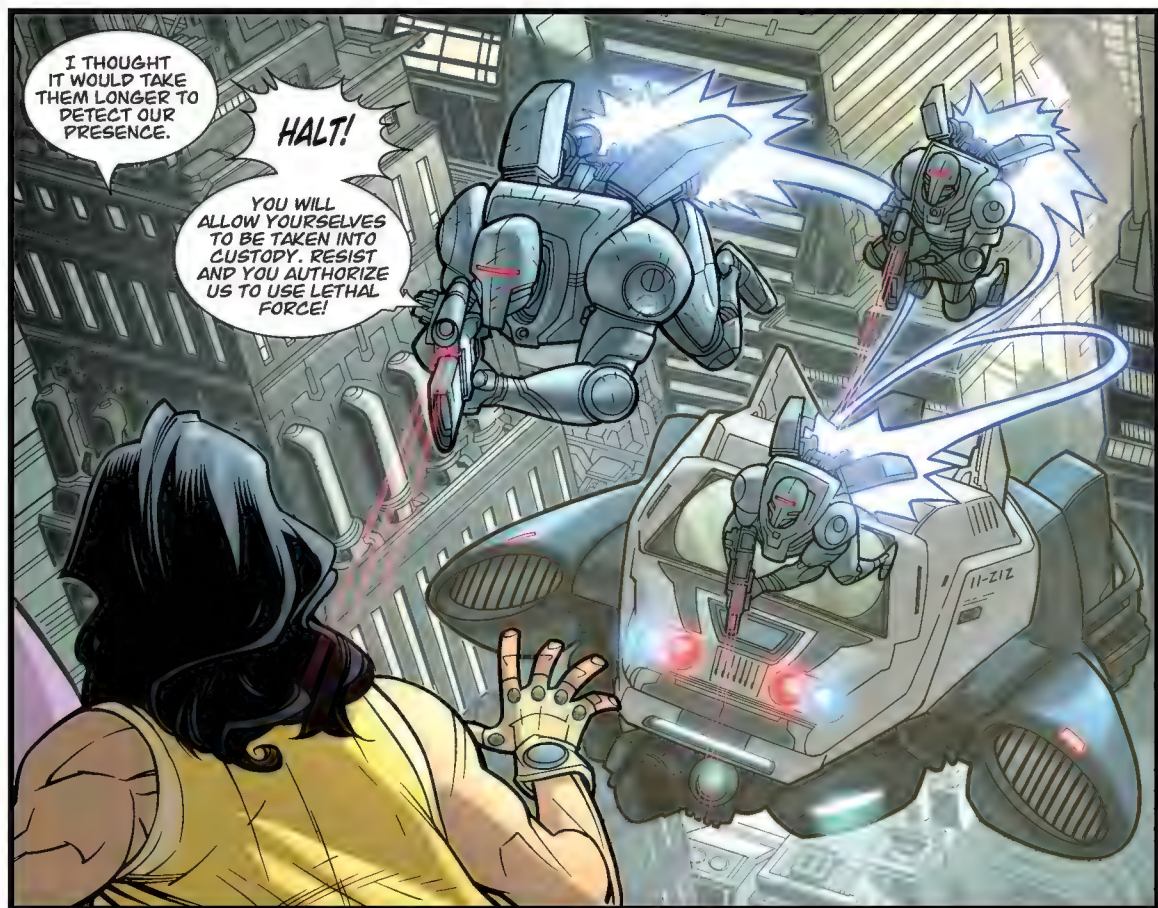
I'LL TAKE
THOSE
OFF YOUR
HANDS.

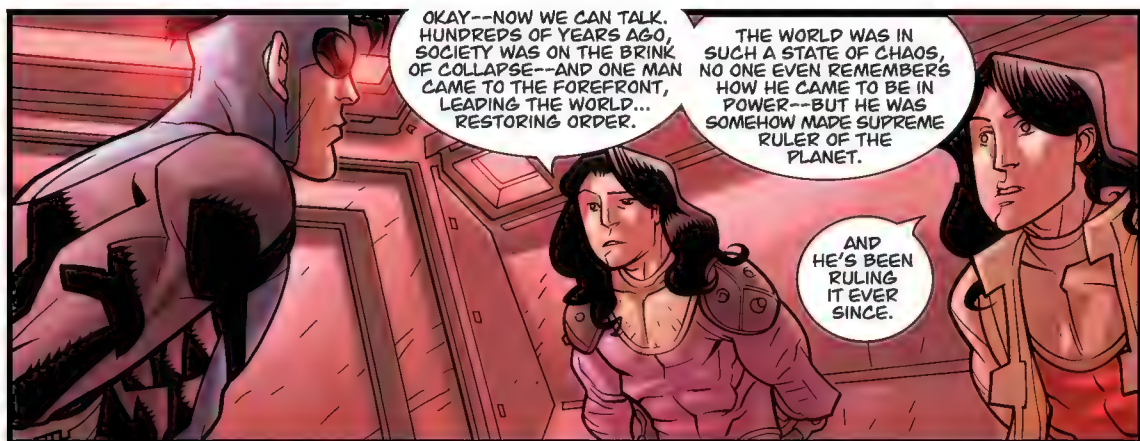
HUH?



WHAT
WAS--?

PROBABLY
BEST IF WE
IGNORE THAT.





OKAY--NOW WE CAN TALK. HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, SOCIETY WAS ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE--AND ONE MAN CAME TO THE FOREFRONT, LEADING THE WORLD... RESTORING ORDER.

THE WORLD WAS IN SUCH A STATE OF CHAOS, NO ONE EVEN REMEMBERS HOW HE CAME TO BE IN POWER--BUT HE WAS SOMEHOW MADE SUPREME RULER OF THE PLANET.

AND HE'S BEEN RULING IT EVER SINCE.



FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS?

IS HE A... VILTRUMITE?



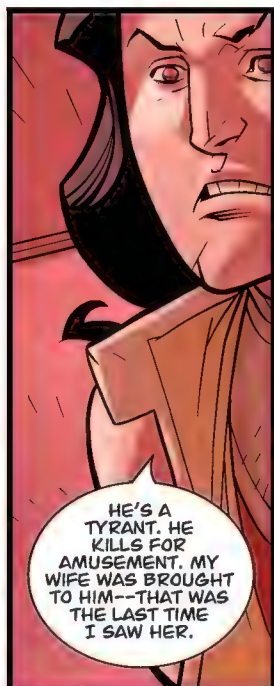
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS.

ANYWAY, HE'S LOST HIS MIND, HE'S DESTROYING THE PLANET, PEOPLE ARE DYING--AND THINGS ARE ONLY GETTING WORSE.



RIGHT--AND WE WERE ASSEMBLING PIECES OF A WEAPON THAT COULD SUPPOSEDLY DEFEAT HIM. THE INK FROM YOUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WAS USED TO MAKE A POISON HE WOULDN'T BE IMMUNE TO.

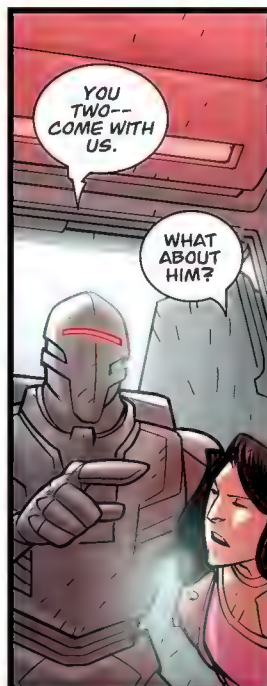
IT DIDN'T WORK.



HE'S A TYRANT. HE KILLS FOR AMUSEMENT. MY WIFE WAS BROUGHT TO HIM--THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW HER.

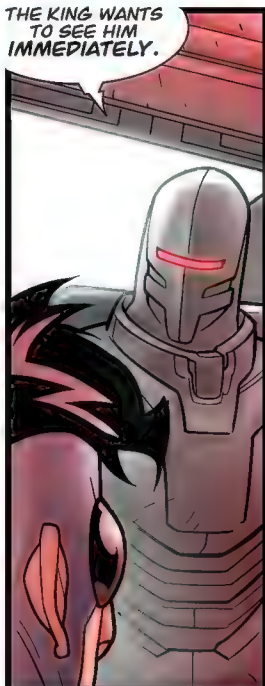


WE'RE BEING BROUGHT TO THE CITADEL, BUT WE'LL BE HELD IN THE DETENTION LEVEL-- YOU'LL NEED TO WORK YOUR WAY UP TO THE ROYAL CHAMBERS. WE'VE GOT REBELS WORKING WITH US EVERYWHERE. ONCE WE FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET YOU TO THE KING-- WE CAN--



YOU TWO-- COME WITH US.

WHAT ABOUT HIM?



THE KING WANTS TO SEE HIM IMMEDIATELY.



NO, I'M FINE--
I'M JUST YOUNGER.
THESE GUYS
BROUGHT ME HERE
FROM THE--

I HAVEN'T
SEEN YOU SINCE
YOU TOOK YOUR
FAMILY AND LEFT
THIS PLANET. WHAT
WAS THAT--TWO
HUNDRED--THREE
HUNDRED YEARS
AGO?

I JUST...
I CAN'T
REMEMBER.

I CARRY WITHIN ME
A GREAT SORROW,
MARK. SOMETHING
I CAN'T OVERCOME...
NOT ANYMORE...

IS IT ABOUT
KATE? DID
KATE DIE?

KATE?
I DON'T
REMEMBER
A KATE...

IS THAT
THE REDHEAD
THAT YOU--

NO!

I DON'T
REMEMBER! I
DON'T REMEMBER
ANYTHING!

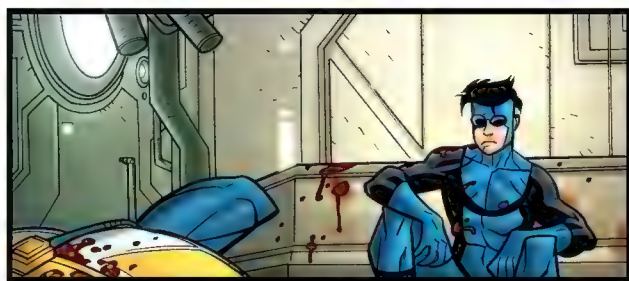
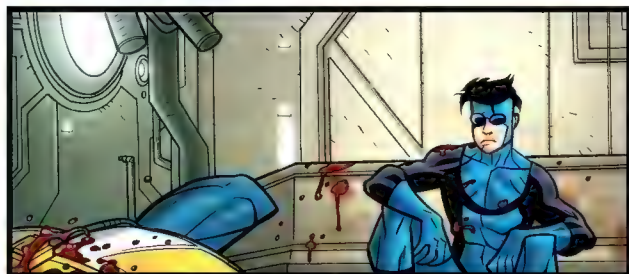
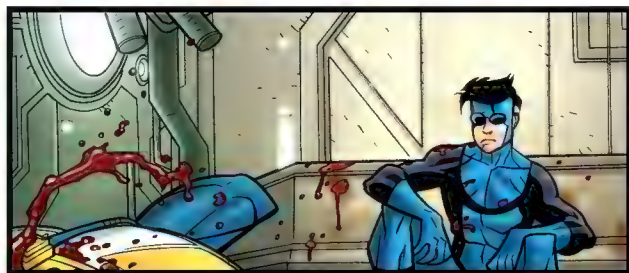
I WANT
IT ALL TO END...
FINALLY, AT
LONG LAST... I
JUST WANT IT
TO BE OVER.

I WANT
TO DIE,
MARK.

UH...
I'M SORRY,
I REALLY
DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO
SAY.







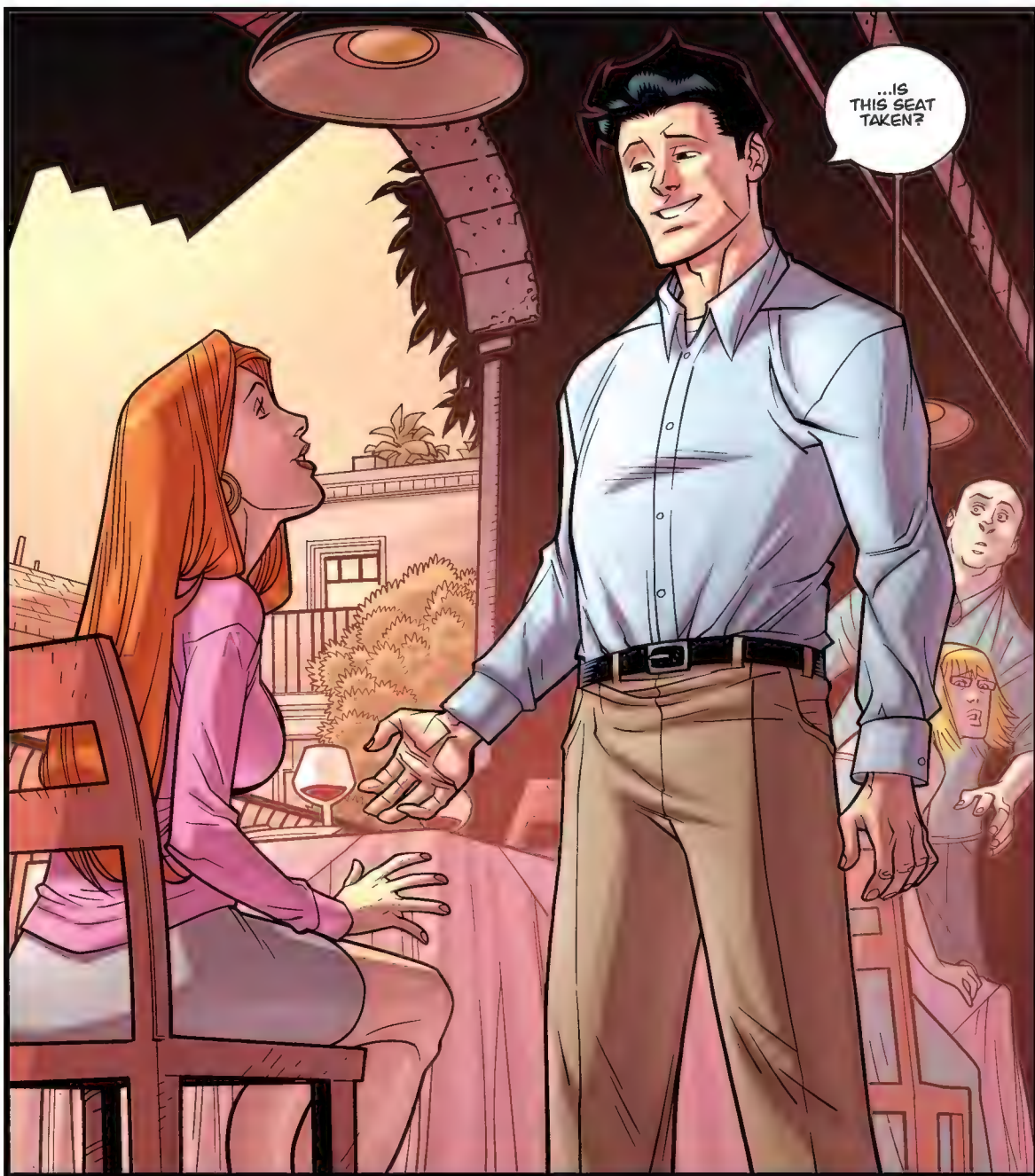
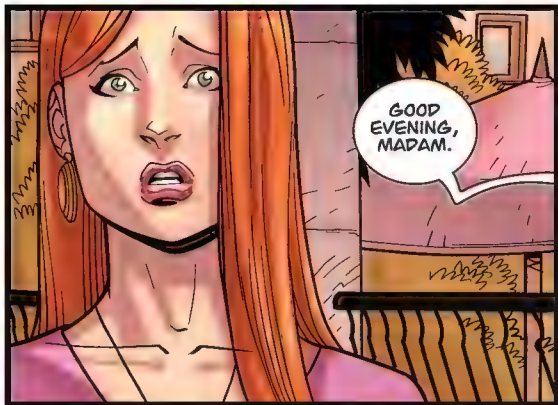
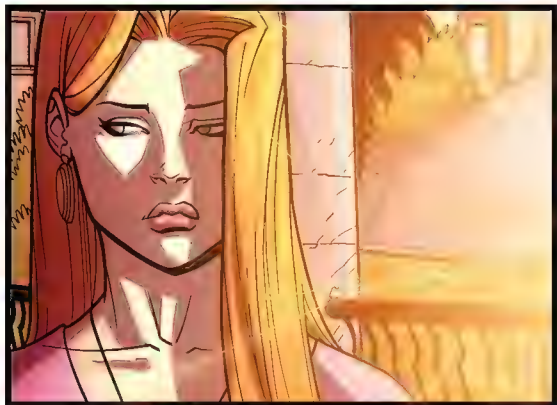
WE WERE ABLE TO CONTACT THE RESISTANCE FROM OUR HOLDING CELL. THE ROYAL GUARD HAS FALLEN--WE'VE TAKEN OVER THE CITADEL, IT'S ALL OVER!

WE CAN TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR TIME WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.

HE'S NOT REALLY DEAD. YOU NEED TO KEEP WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM SEPARATED OR HE'LL COME BACK--THAT'S HOW HE WORKS.







BUT YOU
JUST... HOW
DID--?

I DON'T
GET IT.

TIME TRAVEL--
I'VE BEEN AWAY
FOR A WHILE, BUT
THEY LET ME
RETURN EXACTLY
WHEN I LEFT.
COOL, HUH?

YEAH,
ACTUALLY.
VERY MUCH
SO. DATE:
UNINTERRUPTED.
GIRLFRIEND:
HAPPY.

WHAT I JUST DID IN THE
FUTURE, WELL--I DON'T
REALLY WANT TO TALK
ABOUT IT NOW... BUT
THERE WERE SOME
THINGS THAT WERE
SAID--ABOUT ME IN THE
FUTURE AND, WELL...
DO YOU THINK
I'M A GOOD
PERSON?

WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?
I'M HERE, AREN'T
I? OF COURSE I
DO. WHAT
HAPPENED
THERE?

NOT NOW, LET ME
JUST... I REALLY
LIKE YOU AND I WANT
TO SPEND MORE TIME
WITH YOU BUT THE
SUPERHERO STUFF
HAS KEPT GETTING IN
THE WAY. I THINK
I CAN STOP THAT
NOW.

I'M JUST
GOING TO BE
MORE DEVOTED
TO MAKING THIS
WORK--WE
NEED TO BE
TOGETHER, I
CAN SEE THAT
NOW...

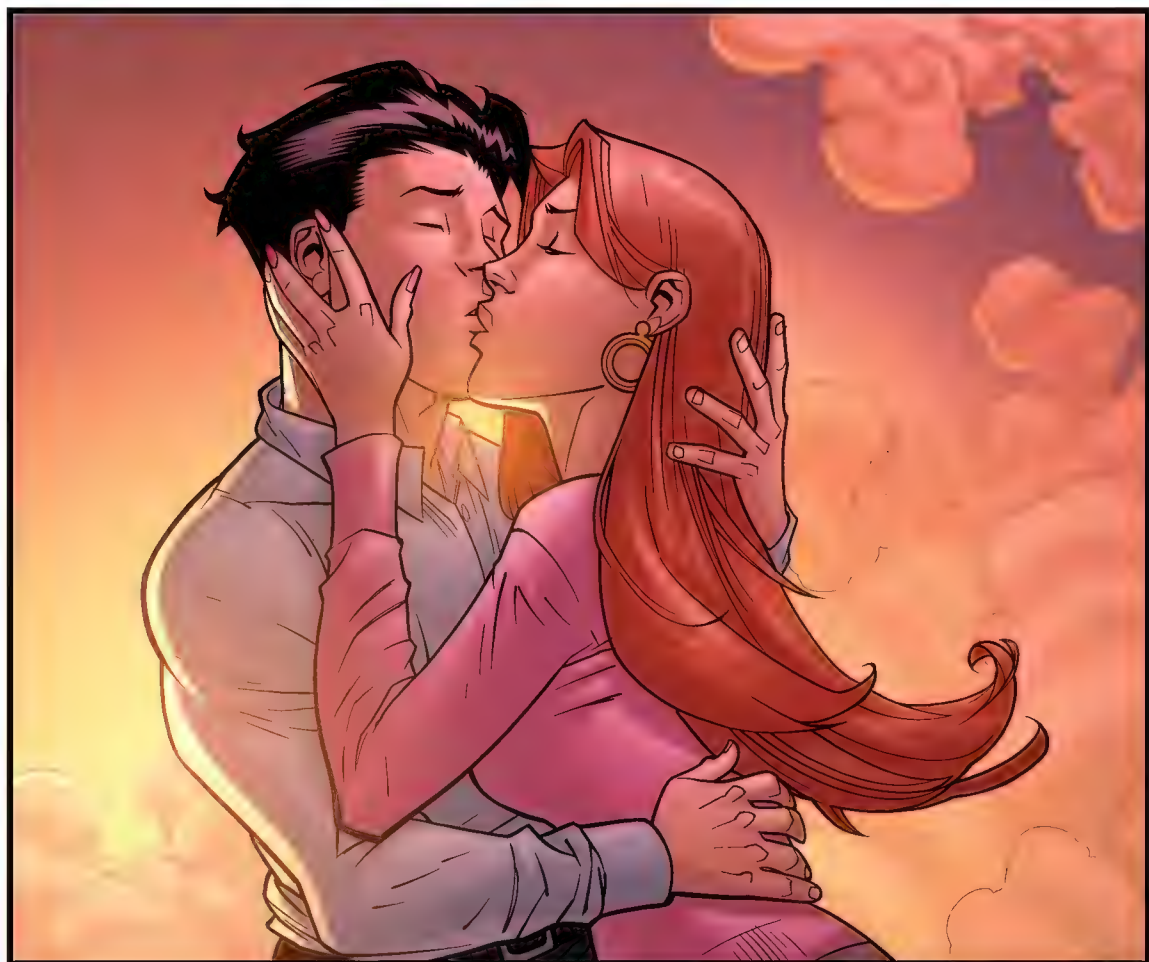
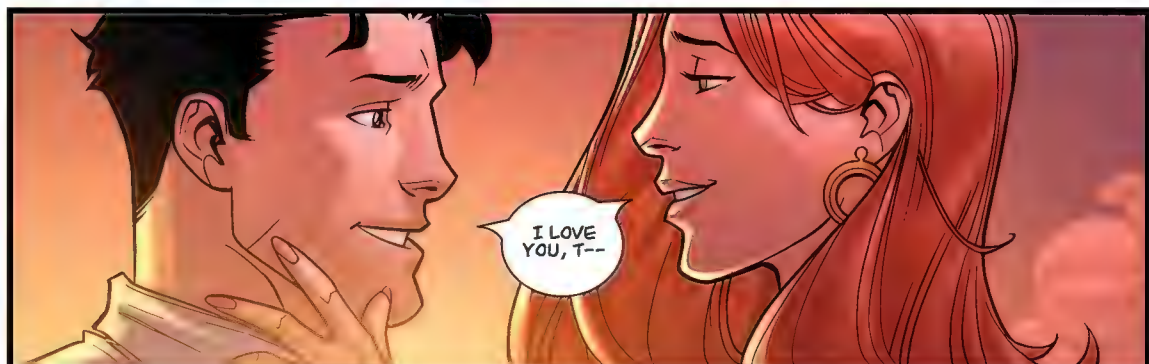
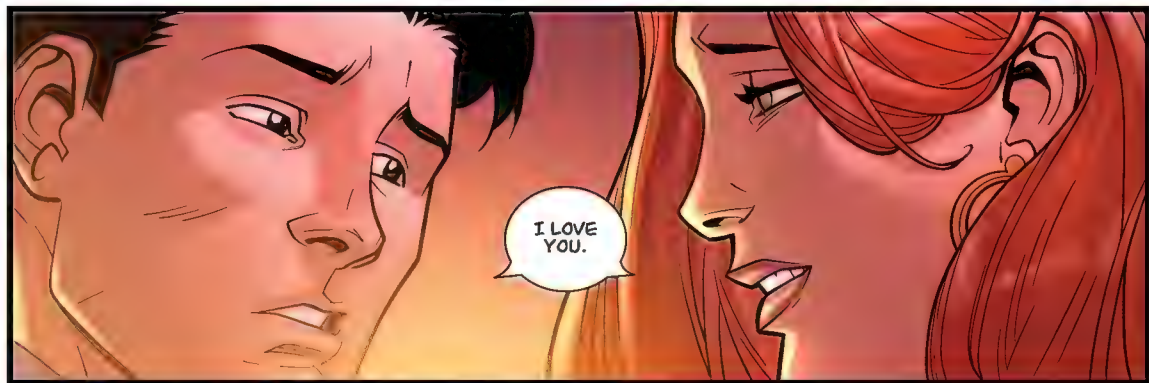
UH...

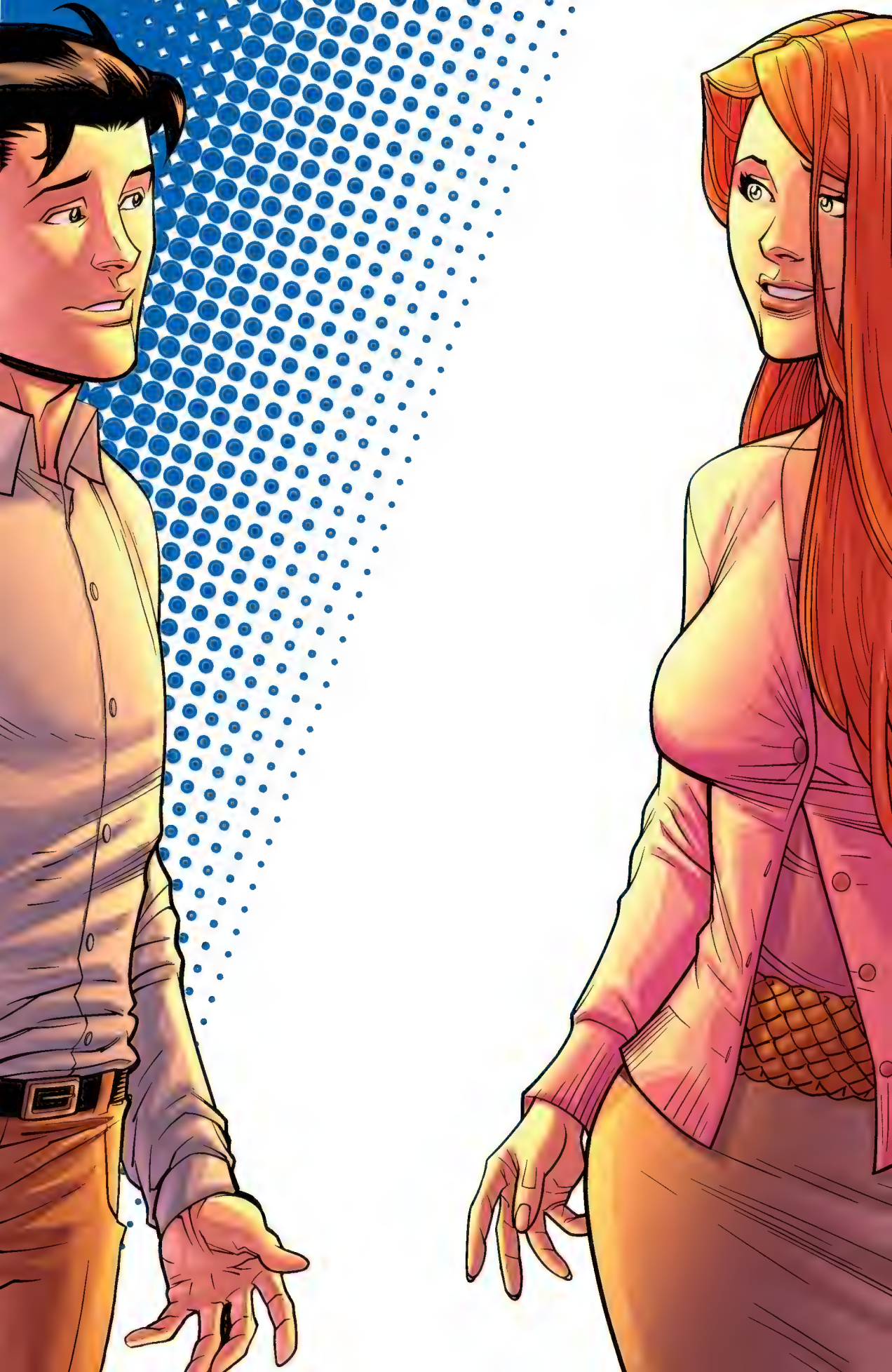
MAYBE
WE SHOULD
GET OUT OF
HERE.

LET'S.



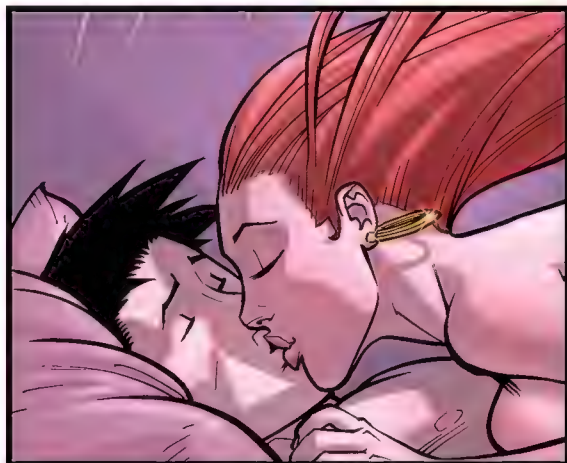
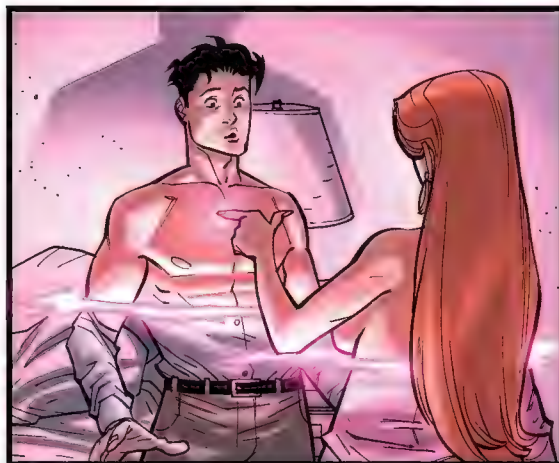
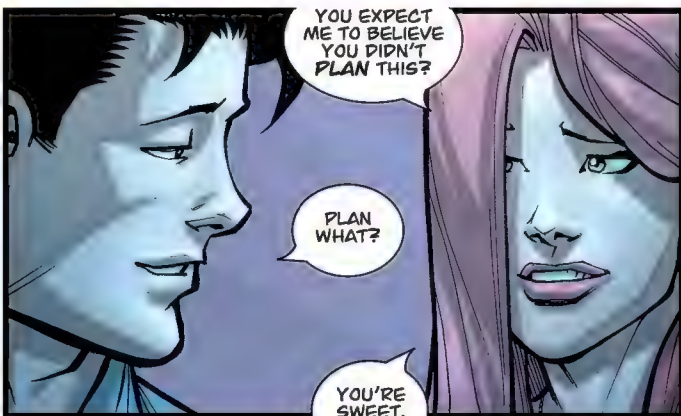
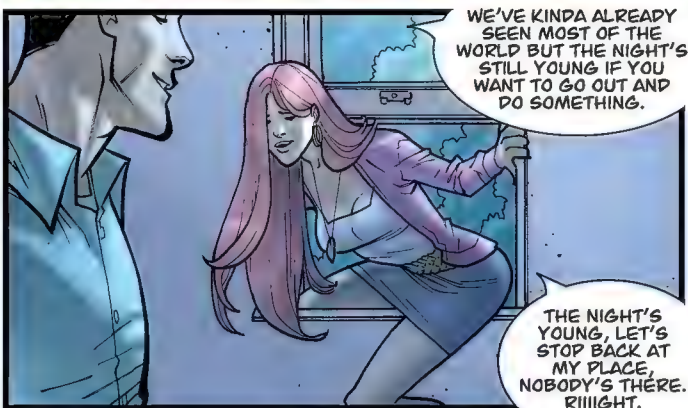
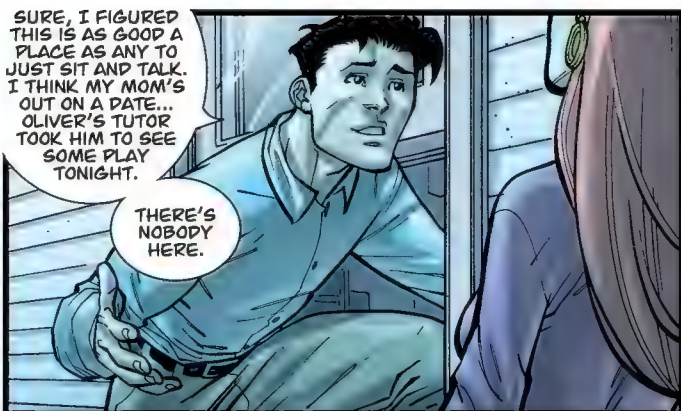






CHAPTER 55





BORN OF A DWINDLING NOMADIC RACE, ROBBED OF THEIR HOMEWORLD BY THE FEARSOME VILTRUMITES! EXPERIMENTED ON TO INCREASE HIS STRENGTH AND SPEED UNTIL HE EMERGED A GUARDIAN OF THE SPACEWAYS! IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS: ALLEN THE ALIEN IN:

LOCK DOWN, BUT NOT OUT!

AND SO, DEAR READER, WE TURN OUR ATTENTION ELSEWHERE TO GIVE YOUNG MARK GRAYSON AND SAMANTHA EVE WILKINS SOME *PRIVACY*.

THIS IS A FAMILY TITLE AFTER ALL.

YES, WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO FAN FAVORITE, ALLEN THE ALIEN... WHO CURRENTLY RESIDES IN A VILTRUMITE PRISON CELL... FOR NOW.

YOU SEE, THESE SHACKLES CANNOT HOLD HIM. THESE WALLS CANNOT HOLD HIM. THIS PRISON CANNOT HOLD HIM, FOR ALLEN THE ALIEN HAS GROWN STRONG, *VERY* STRONG.*

BUT STILL, HE REMAINS, STILL HE WAITS...

...BECAUSE ALLEN THE ALIEN HAS A *PLAN*.

*SEE ISSUE 38 FOR DETAILS, INVINCIBLEHEADS.

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ALLEN IS HERE FOR A REASON AND THAT REASON IS NOLAN GRAYSON, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS OMNI-MAN, THE FATHER OF INVINCIBLE.

HE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE TAKEN PRISONER WHEN HE LEARNED NOLAN WAS BEING HELD HERE.*

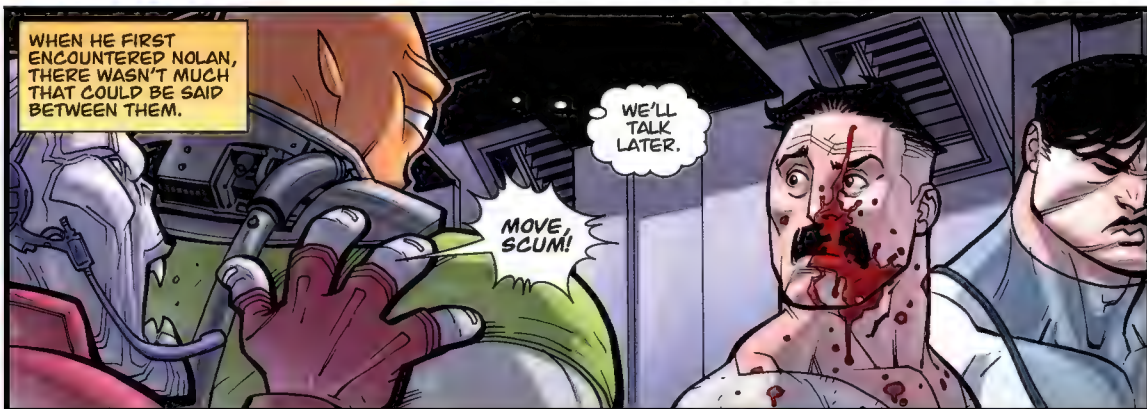
*SEE ISSUE 45.



WHEN HE FIRST ENCOUNTERED NOLAN, THERE WASN'T MUCH THAT COULD BE SAID BETWEEN THEM.

WE'LL TALK LATER.

MOVE, SCUM!

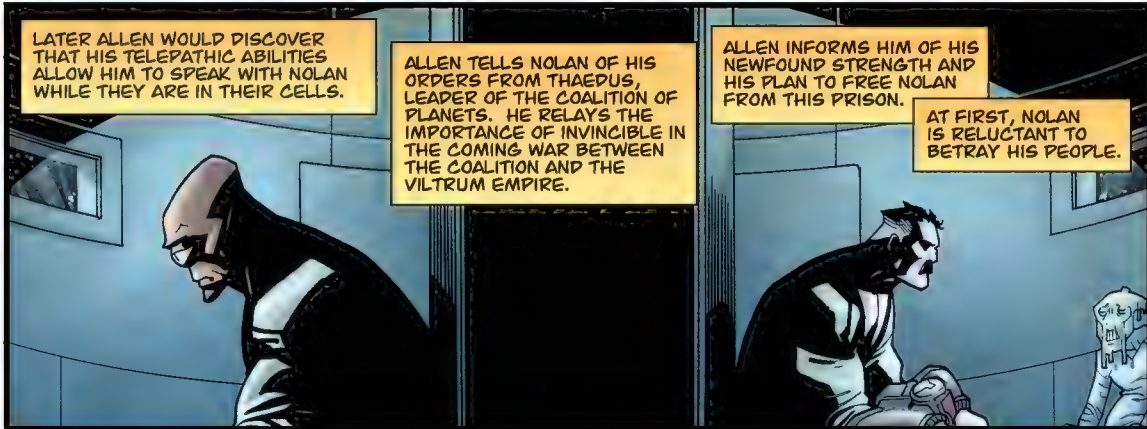


LATER ALLEN WOULD DISCOVER THAT HIS TELEPATHIC ABILITIES ALLOW HIM TO SPEAK WITH NOLAN WHILE THEY ARE IN THEIR CELLS.

ALLEN TELLS NOLAN OF HIS ORDERS FROM THAEPUS, LEADER OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS. HE RELAYS THE IMPORTANCE OF INVINCIBLE IN THE COMING WAR BETWEEN THE COALITION AND THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

ALLEN INFORMS HIM OF HIS NEWFOUND STRENGTH AND HIS PLAN TO FREE NOLAN FROM THIS PRISON.

AT FIRST, NOLAN IS RELUCTANT TO BETRAY HIS PEOPLE.



ALLEN CONTINUES TO TELL NOLAN ALL HE KNOWS ABOUT NOLAN'S BOOKS, INVINCIBLE AND HIS NEW YOUNGER BROTHER, AND EVENTUALLY, HE BEGINS TO TELL HIM OF OTHER THINGS.

HER NAME IS TELIA AND SHE IS VERY SPECIAL TO ME. I LOVE HER. I DO. BUT MY PEOPLE WON'T ALLOW ME TO BE WITH HER.

MY PEOPLE, THE UNOPANS, WERE NEARLY EXTINCT--WE HAVE STRICT MATING RULES TO ENSURE OUR SURVIVAL. WE HAVE TO LIVE IN SECRET...





EVENTUALLY, THIS LED TO NOLAN TALKING ABOUT OTHER THINGS AS WELL.

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL-- NOT EXACTLY, BUT I HAVE FEELINGS THAT GO AGAINST EVERYTHING I'VE EVER BELIEVED TO BE TRUE.

MY ENTIRE EXISTENCE HAS BEEN PUT INTO QUESTION. I FEEL A LOVE I'VE NEVER FELT BEFORE, MADE STRONGER BY ABSENCE, AND IT'S SOMETHING, AS A VILTRUMITE, I SHOULD NOT BE FEELING.



MANY THINGS WERE DISCUSSED IN THE TIME NOLAN AWAITED EXECUTION FOR HIS CRIMES AGAINST THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

EVENTUALLY THEY EVEN DISCUSSED THEIR MANY ENCOUNTERS IN EARTH'S ORBIT, YEARS AGO AT THIS POINT, WHEN NEITHER ONE KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT THE OTHER.*

A BOND STARTED TO FORM.

*SEEN BRIEFLY IN ISSUE 2 AND AGAIN IN ISSUE 11.



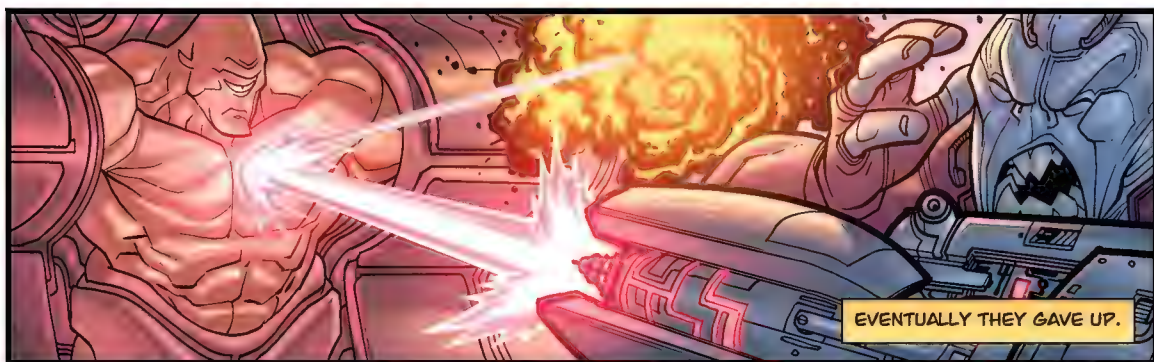
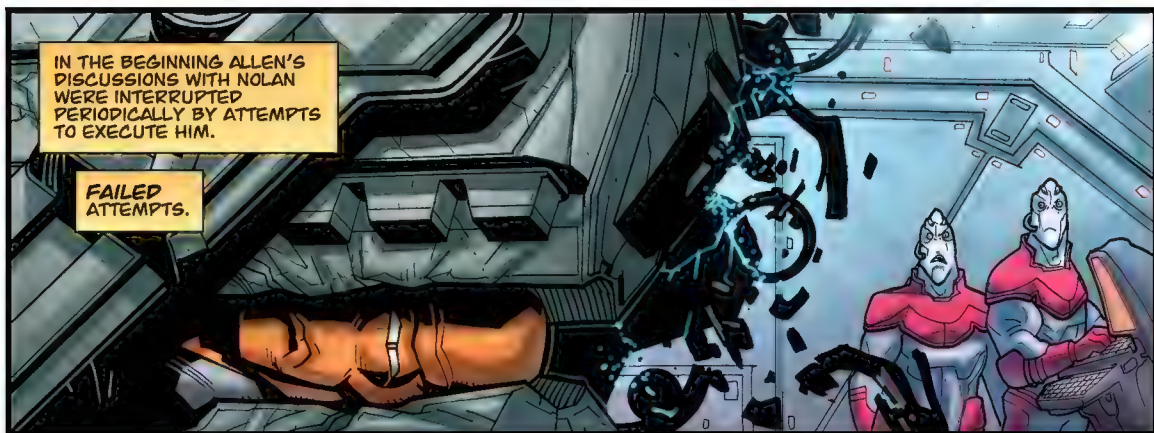
UNTIL THEY WERE FRIENDS.



THAT BOND GREW, UNTIL THE MISSION BECAME THAT MUCH MORE IMPORTANT.

ALLEN WAS NO LONGER THERE TO RESCUE A POSSIBLE ALLY.

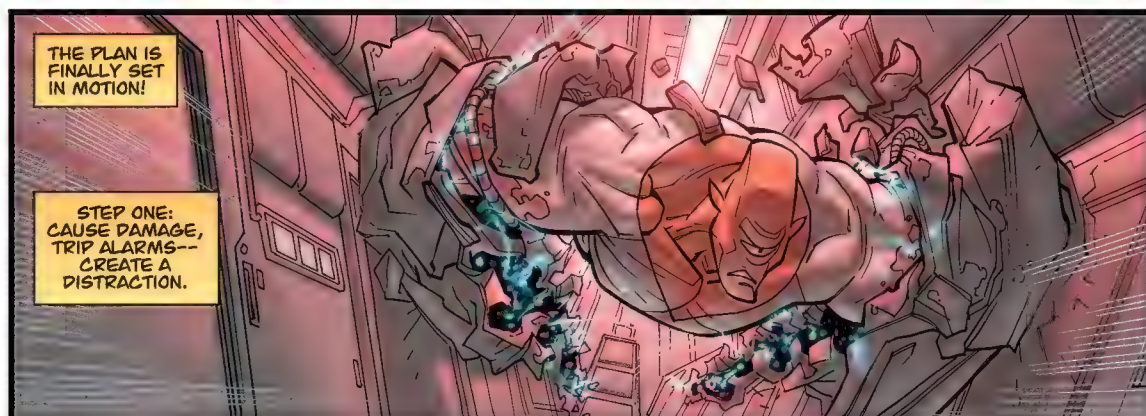
HE NEEDED TO SAVE HIS FRIEND AND HE WAS NOT SURE HE WOULD SUCCEED--AND THIS WORRIED HIM.





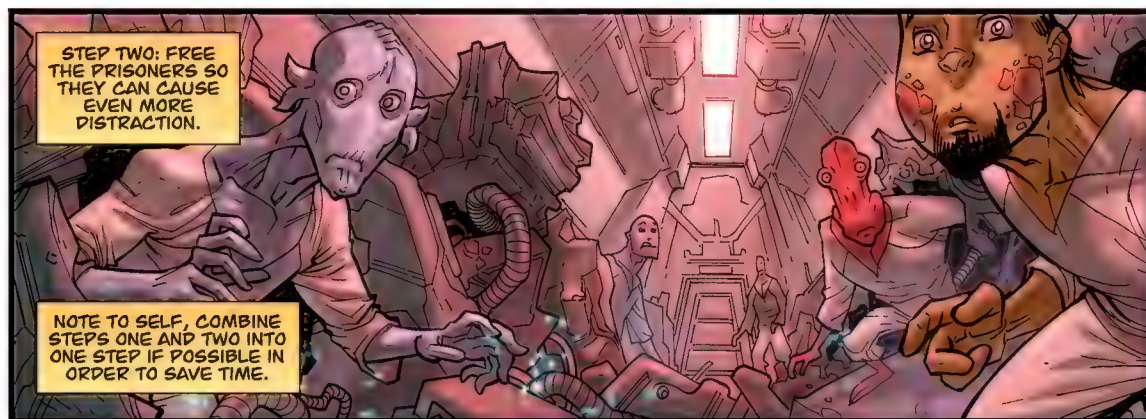


IT WAS THEN THAT THE ABSURDITY OF ALLEN ACTUALLY BEING CONTAINED IN THIS PRISON BECAME ALL TOO CLEAR.



THE PLAN IS FINALLY SET IN MOTION!

STEP ONE: CAUSE DAMAGE, TRIP ALARMS-- CREATE A DISTRACTION.



STEP TWO: FREE THE PRISONERS SO THEY CAN CAUSE EVEN MORE DISTRACTION.

NOTE TO SELF, COMBINE STEPS ONE AND TWO INTO ONE STEP IF POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO SAVE TIME.



STEP THREE: SCAN THE PRISONERS AS THEY ESCAPE, SEE IF ANY OF THEM ARE FORMIDABLE ENOUGH TO AID US IN OUR ESCAPE EFFORTS.

STEP ONE: CHECK.

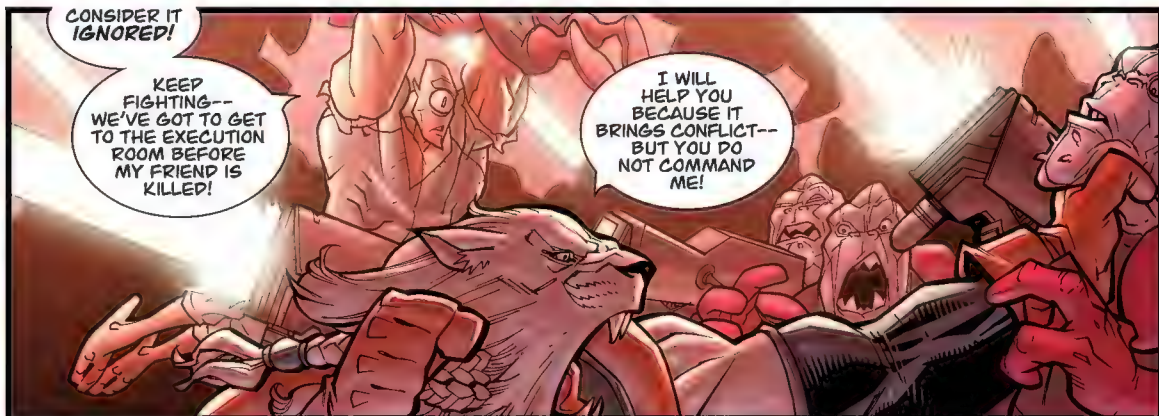
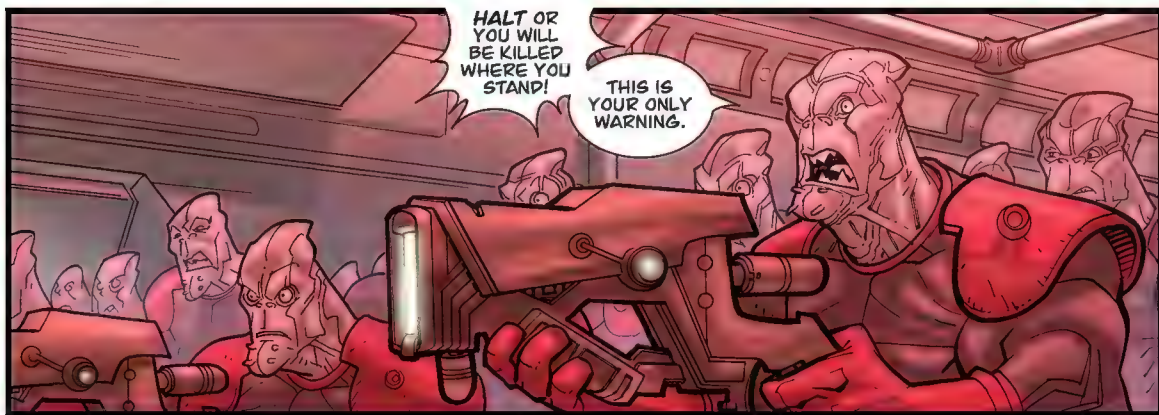
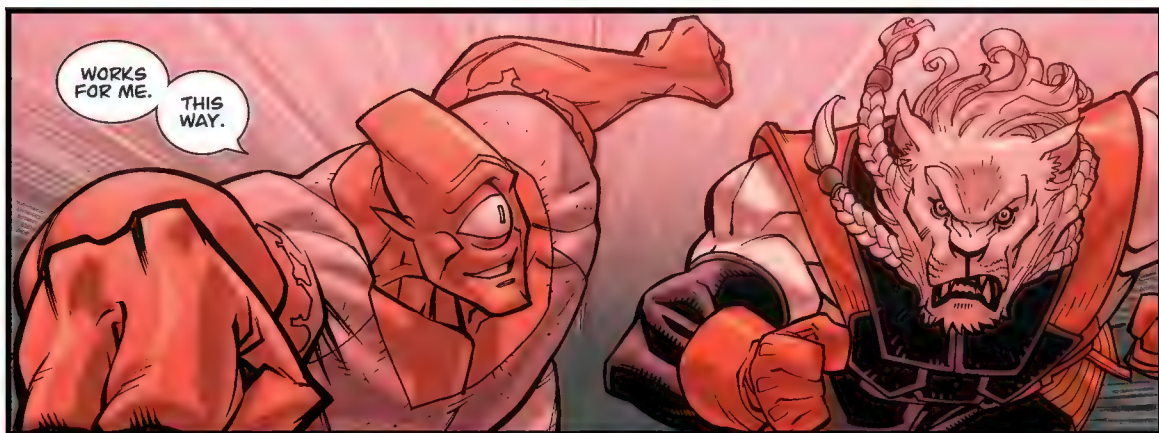
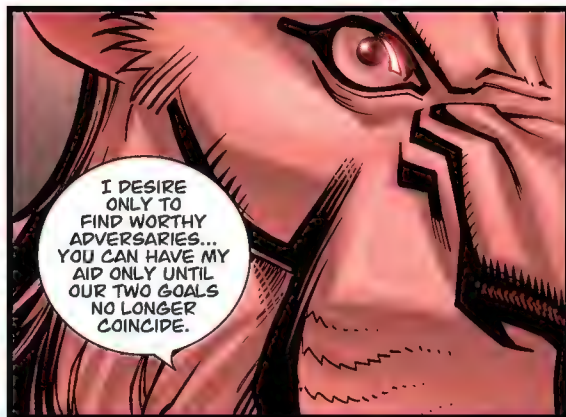
STEP TWO: CHECK.

STEP THREE: ...?

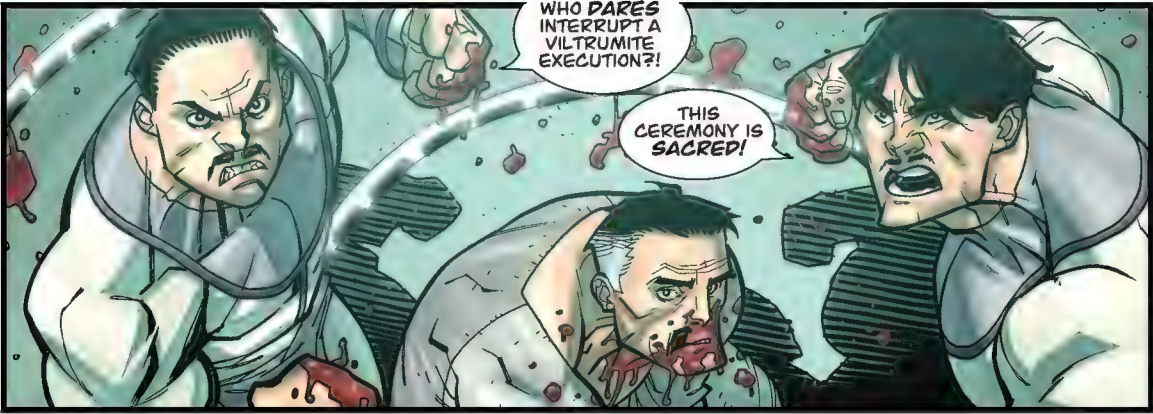
WHO IS
BRAVE ENOUGH
TO FREE
**BATTLE
BEAST?!**

CHECK.

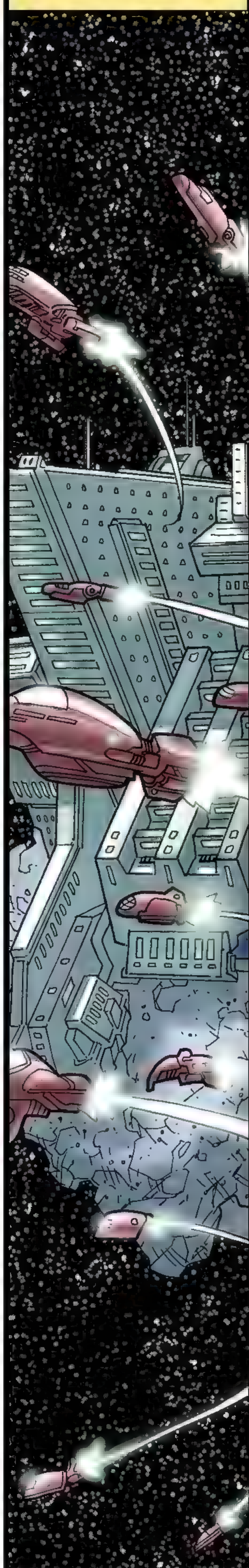








WHAT FOLLOWS IS SHEER PANDEMONIUM. THE FREED PRISONERS HIJACK EVERY MEANS OF ESCAPE LOCATED WITHIN THE PRISON AND DO JUST THAT.



ALLEN'S NEW FRIEND, BATTLE BEAST, FOCUSES ONLY ON ONE VILTRUMITE, HELPING ONLY BY KEEPING HIM OCCUPIED.

HE HAS FOUND HIS WORTHY ADVERSARY AND IS CONTENT TO SIMPLY ENJOY THE BATTLE.



THIS LEAVES NOLAN AND ALLEN ALONE TO FACE THE REMAINING VILTRUMITE EXECUTIONER-- AND HIS ARMY OF SUPER-POWERED PRISON GUARDS.

IT ISN'T A FIGHT EASILY WON.

BUT IT'S NOT FOR LACK OF TRYING ON THEIR PART.



HOLD UP--

I'VE GOT AN IDEA! WE CAN SURVIVE OUT IN SPACE--

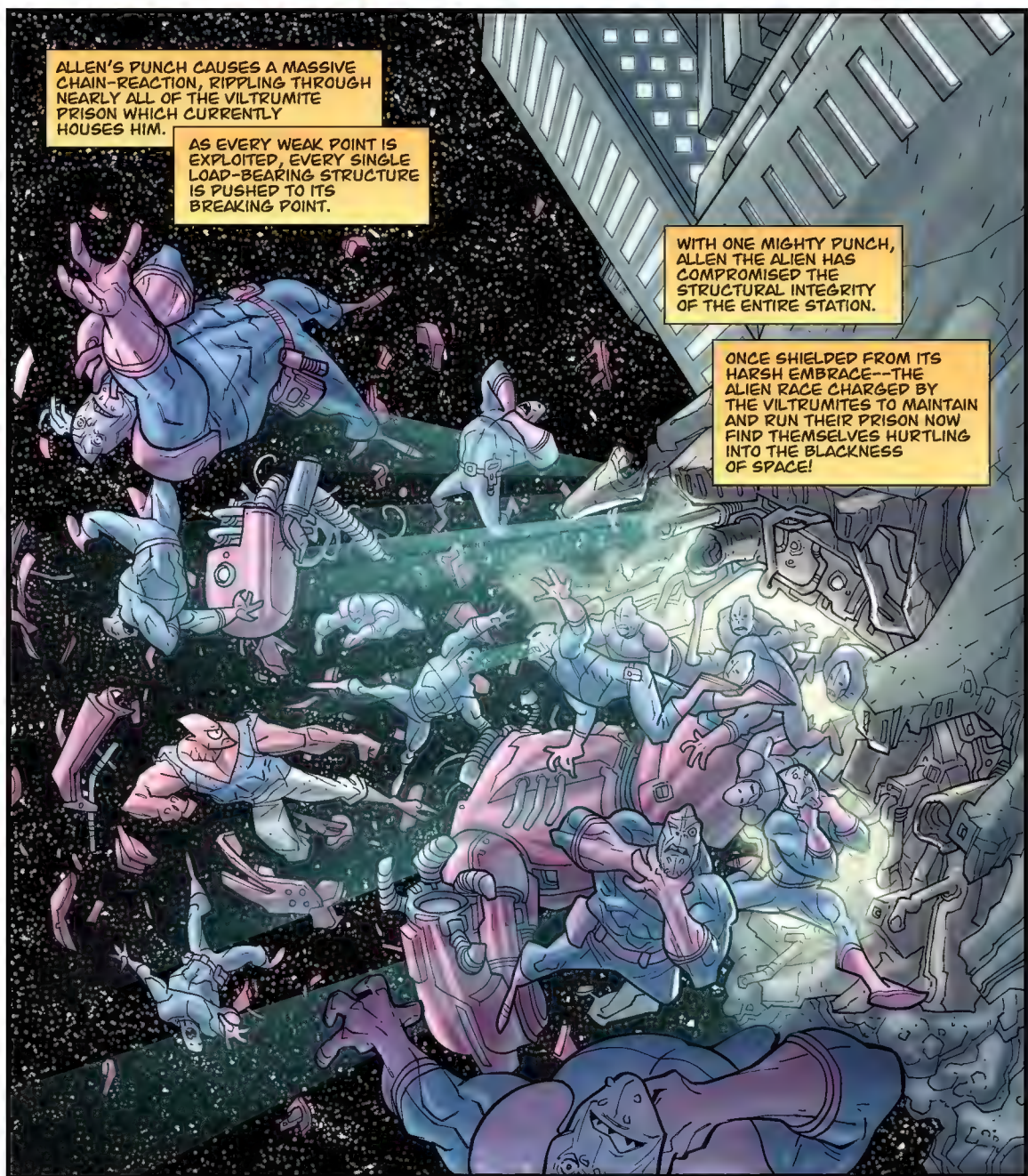


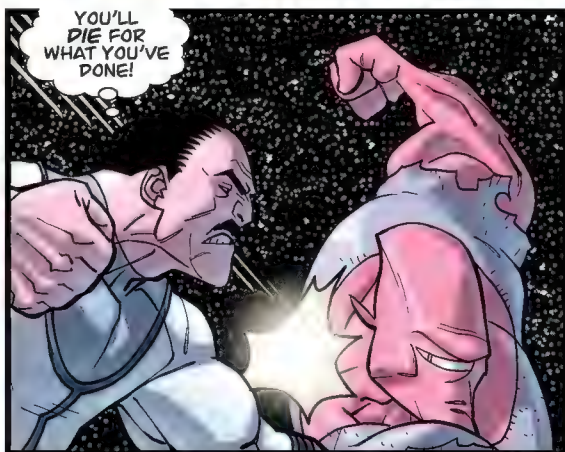
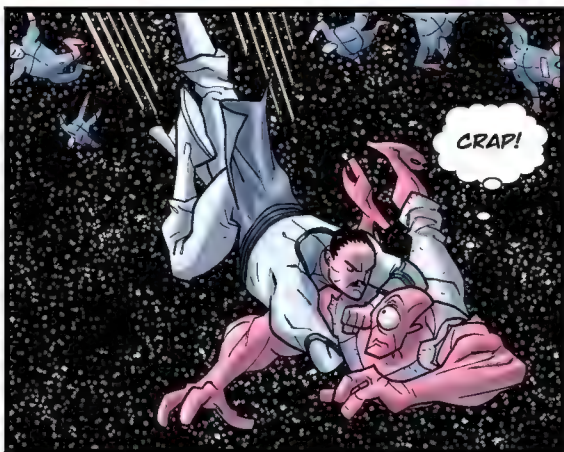
ALLEN'S PUNCH CAUSES A MASSIVE CHAIN-REACTION, RIPPLING THROUGH NEARLY ALL OF THE VILTRUMITE PRISON WHICH CURRENTLY HOUSES HIM.

AS EVERY WEAK POINT IS EXPLOITED, EVERY SINGLE LOAD-BEARING STRUCTURE IS PUSHED TO ITS BREAKING POINT.

WITH ONE MIGHTY PUNCH, ALLEN THE ALIEN HAS COMPROMISED THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE ENTIRE STATION.

ONCE SHIELDED FROM ITS HARSH EMBRACE--THE ALIEN RACE CHARGED BY THE VILTRUMITES TO MAINTAIN AND RUN THEIR PRISON NOW FIND THEMSELVES HURLING INTO THE BLACKNESS OF SPACE!



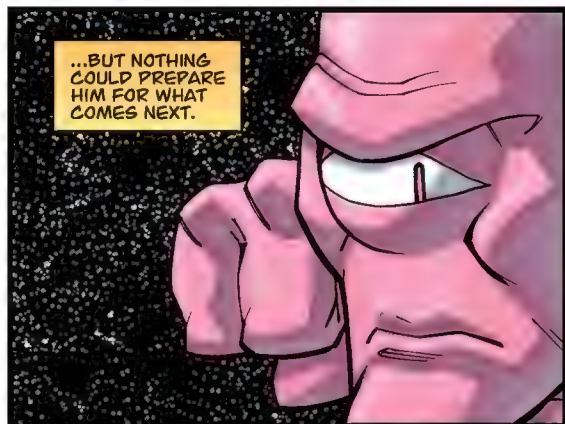


THE VILTRUMITE AGENT TRAINED WITH THE BEST OF THEM, HE SHOULDN'T GO NAMELESS, HE DESERVED A MUCH BETTER FATE THAN THIS.

HE WAS STRONG, HE WAS LOYAL-- HE WAS A VERY GOOD SOLDIER.



HE COULD HAVE BEEN THE PRIDE OF THE EMPIRE...



...BUT NOTHING COULD PREPARE HIM FOR WHAT COMES NEXT.





WHERE'S
THAT OTHER
VILTRUMITE--
AND MY FURRY
FRIEND?

I HAVEN'T
SEEN THEM SINCE
YOU DEMOLISHED
THAT WALL AND
SENT US OUT HERE--
YOU THINK HE
COULD SURVIVE
OUT HERE?

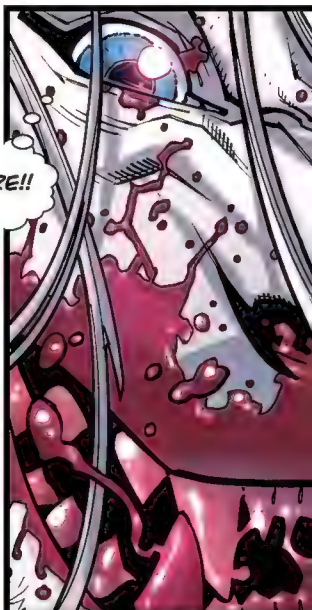
NO DOUBT.
MAYBE HE JUST
RAN--BUT THEN
WHERE'S THE
VILTRUMITE?



MORE!

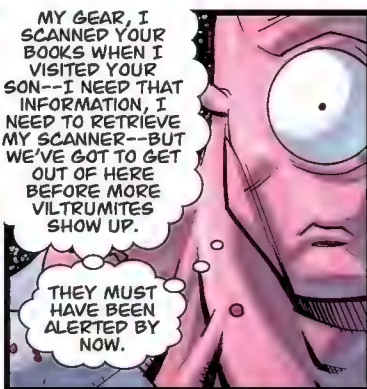
MORE!

MORE!!



CRAP!

WHAT
IS IT?



MY GEAR, I
SCANNED YOUR
BOOKS WHEN I
VISITED YOUR
SON--I NEED THAT
INFORMATION, I
NEED TO RETRIEVE
MY SCANNER--BUT
WE'VE GOT TO GET
OUT OF HERE
BEFORE MORE
VILTRUMITES
SHOW UP.

THEY MUST
HAVE BEEN
ALERTED BY
NOW.



YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO WORRY
ABOUT
THAT.

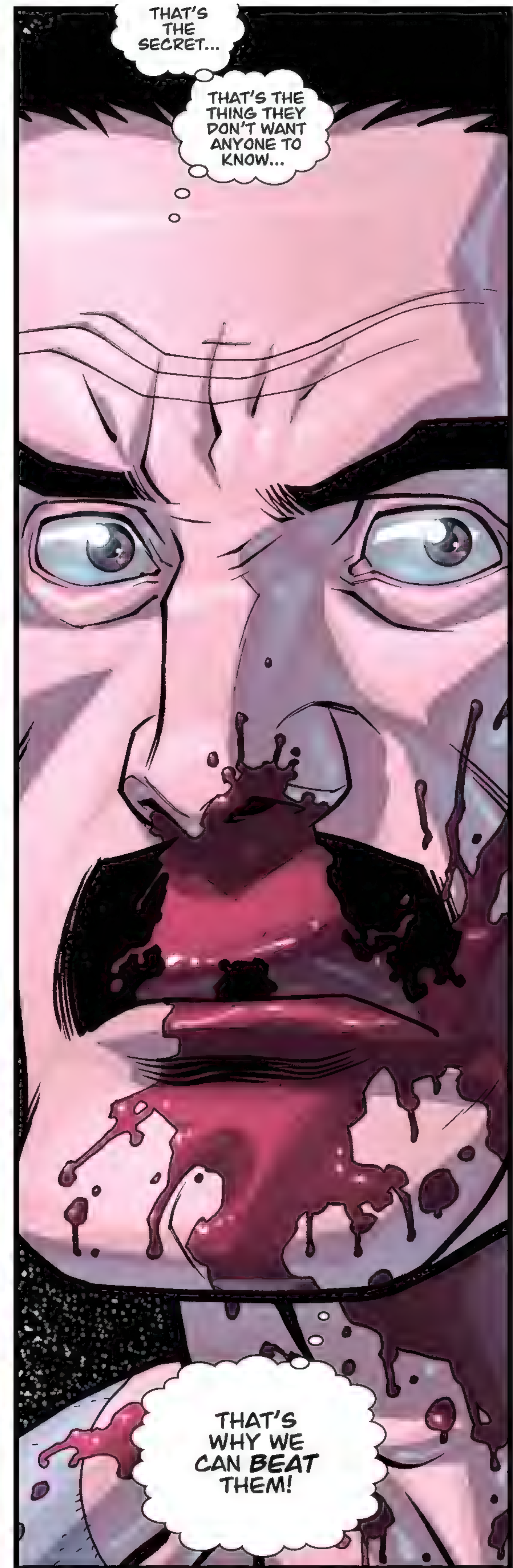
WHY?

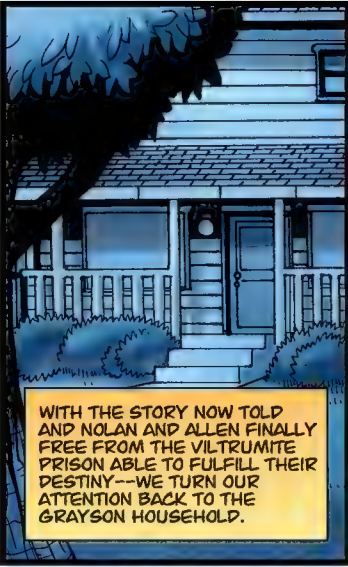


YOU HAVE
TIME TO GET
YOUR GEAR.
TAKE YOUR TIME,
WE'LL LOOK
FOR MORE
SUPPLIES.

TRUST
ME... NO
ONE IS
COMING.

HOW DO
YOU KNOW
THAT? HOW
CAN YOU
BE SO
SURE?



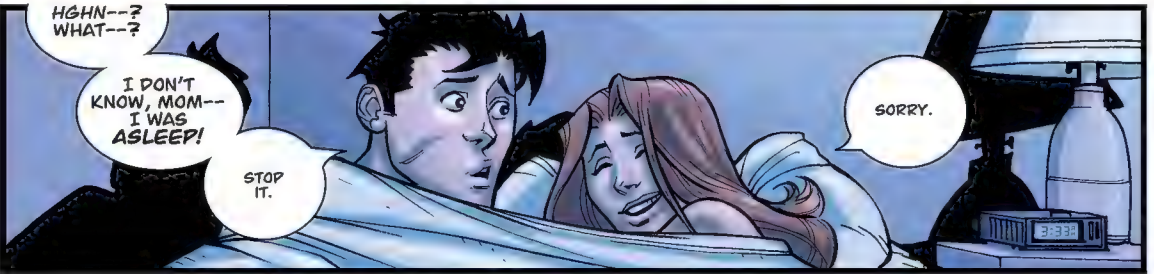


WITH THE STORY NOW TOLD AND NOLAN AND ALLEN FINALLY FREE FROM THE VILTRUMITE PRISON ABLE TO FULFILL THEIR DESTINY--WE TURN OUR ATTENTION BACK TO THE GRAYSON HOUSEHOLD.



MARK?! WHY'S THIS DOOR LOCKED?

WHAT'S GOING ON?



HGHN--? WHAT--?

I DON'T KNOW, MOM-- I WAS ASLEEP!

STOP IT.

SORRY.

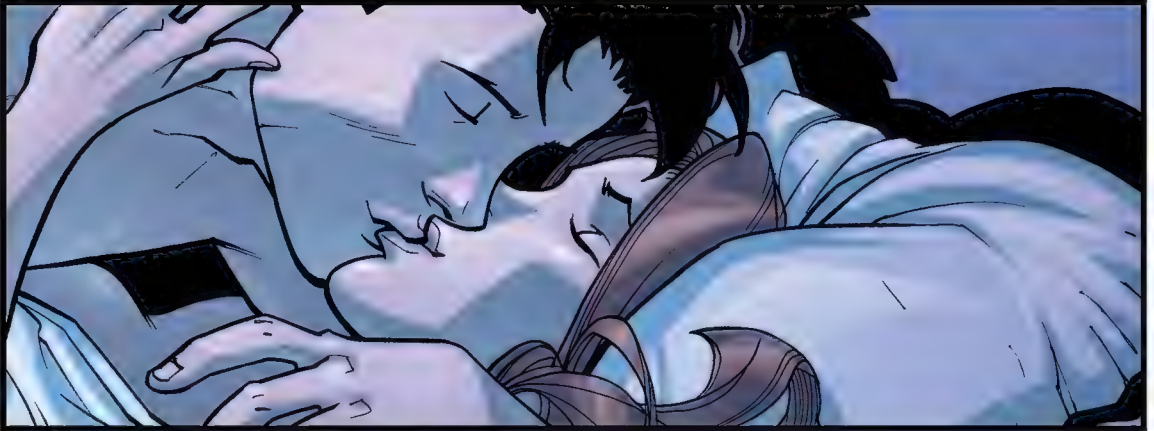


OH, SORRY... I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING.

GOOD NIGHT.



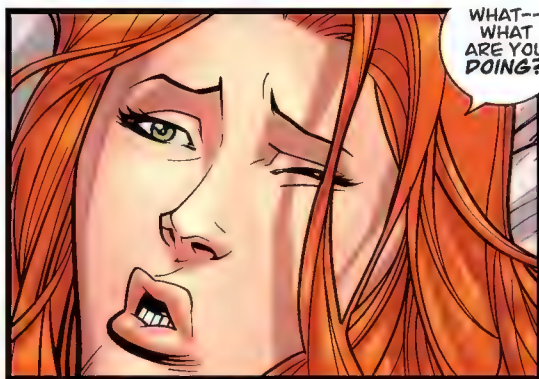
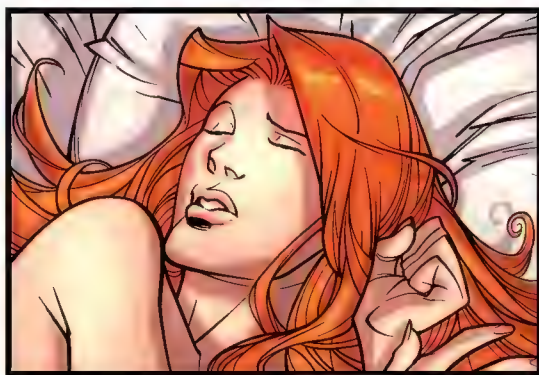
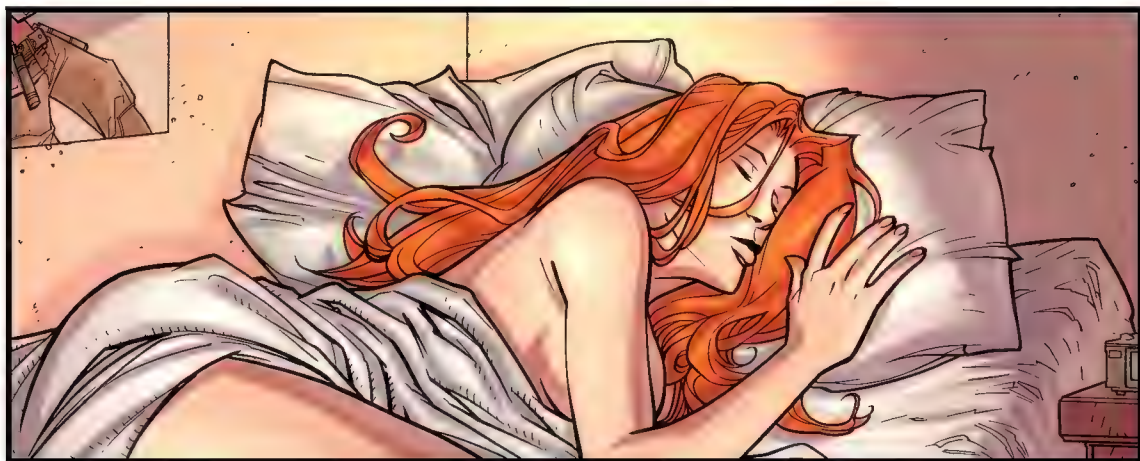
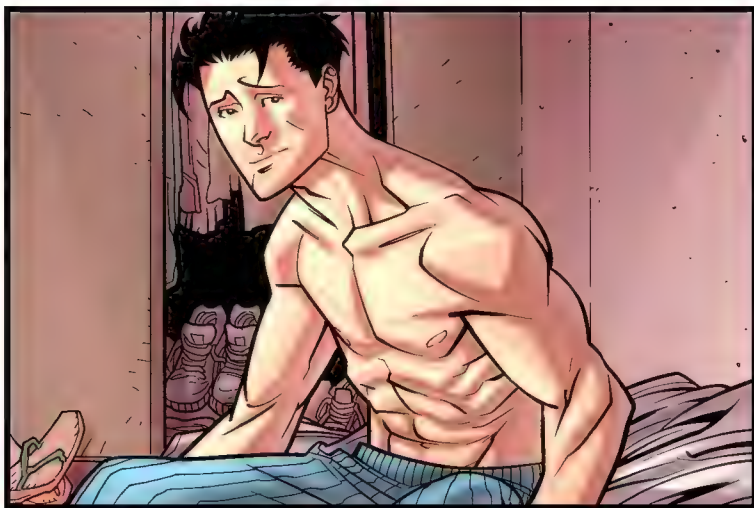
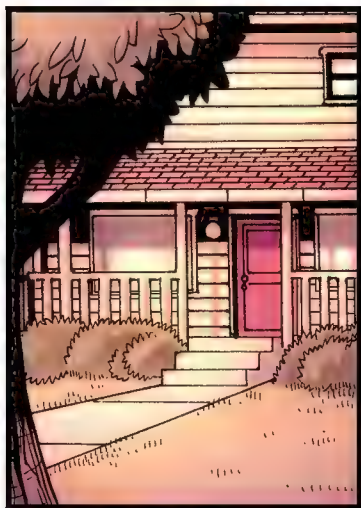
GOOD NIGHT.

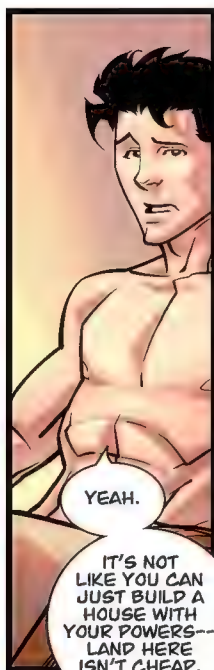
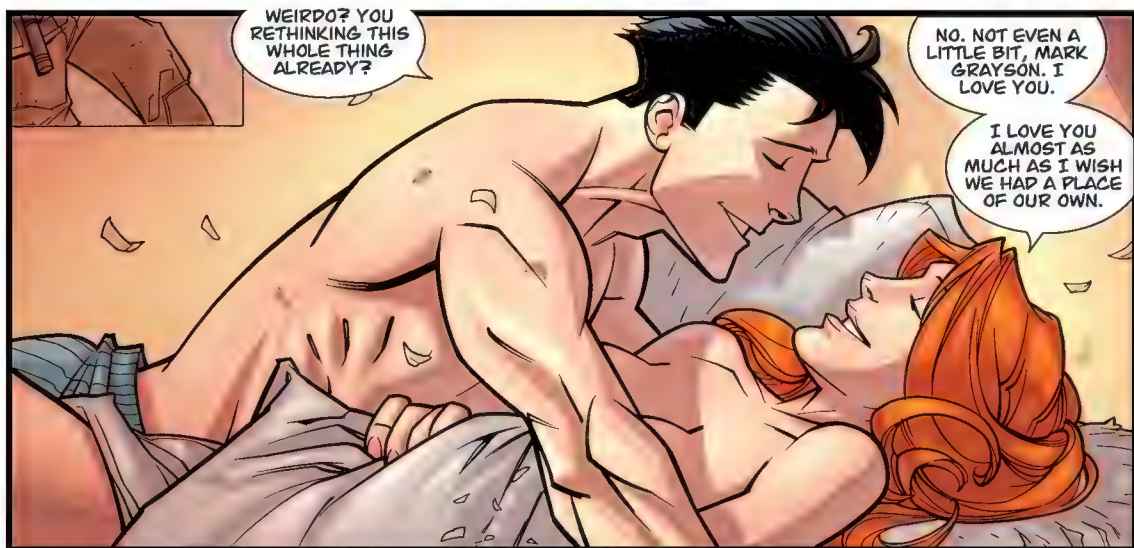
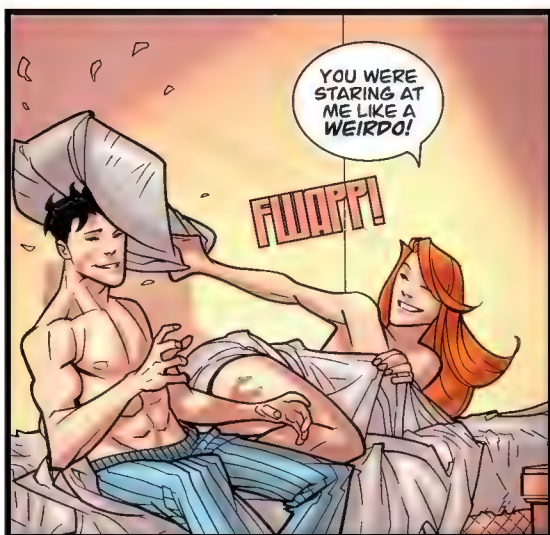
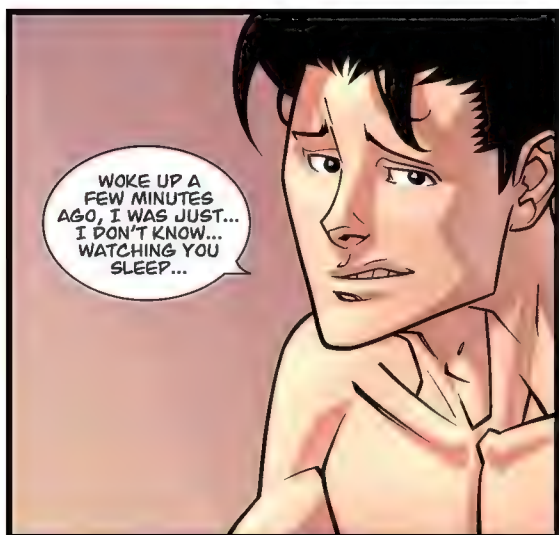




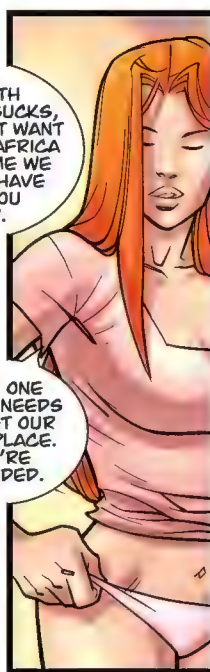
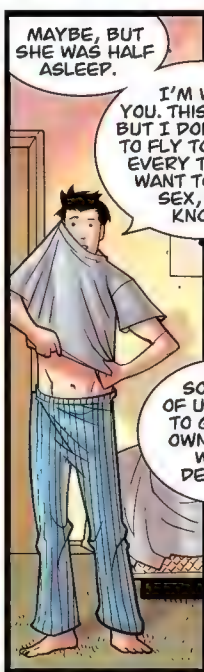
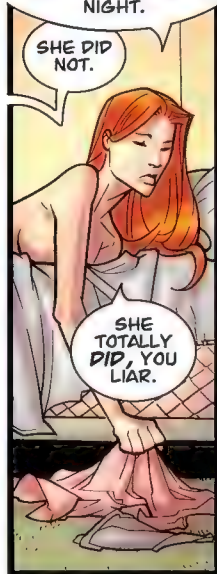
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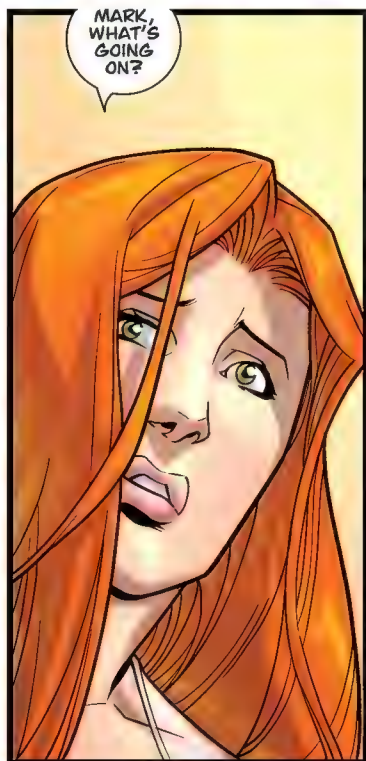


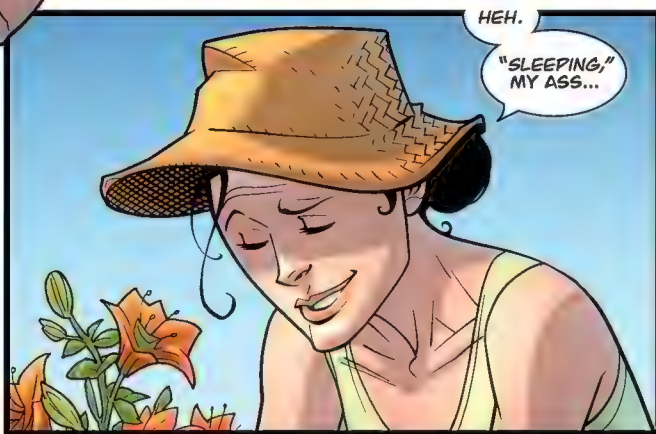
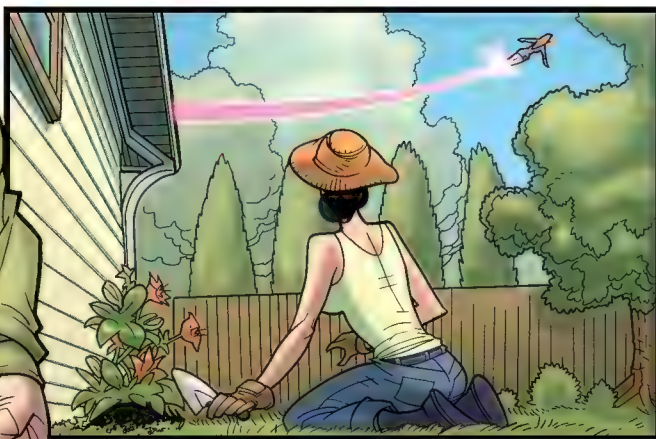


THIS ISN'T COOL. YOUR MOM'S WHAT--TEN FEET AWAY WHILE WE'RE DOING THIS? SHE HEARD US LAST NIGHT.

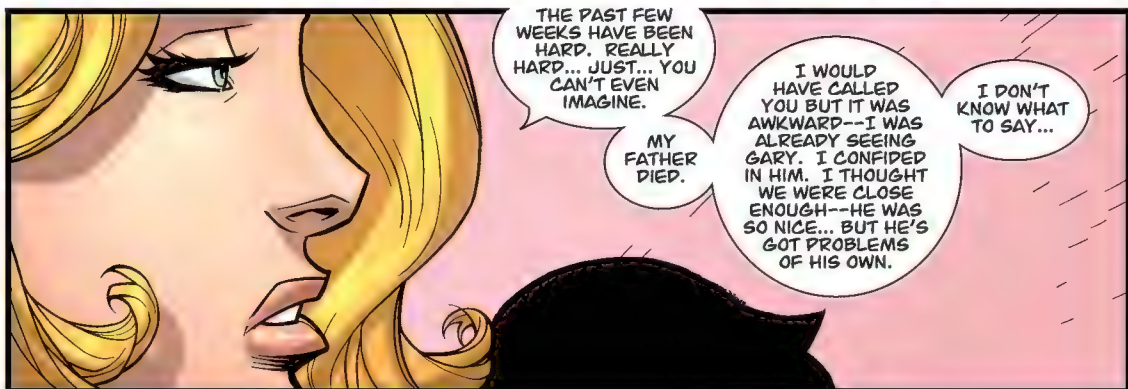


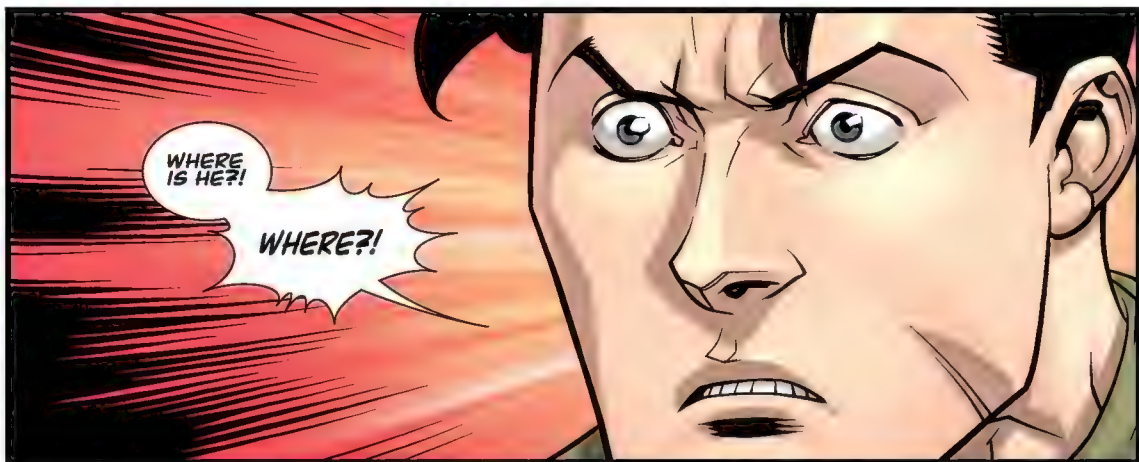
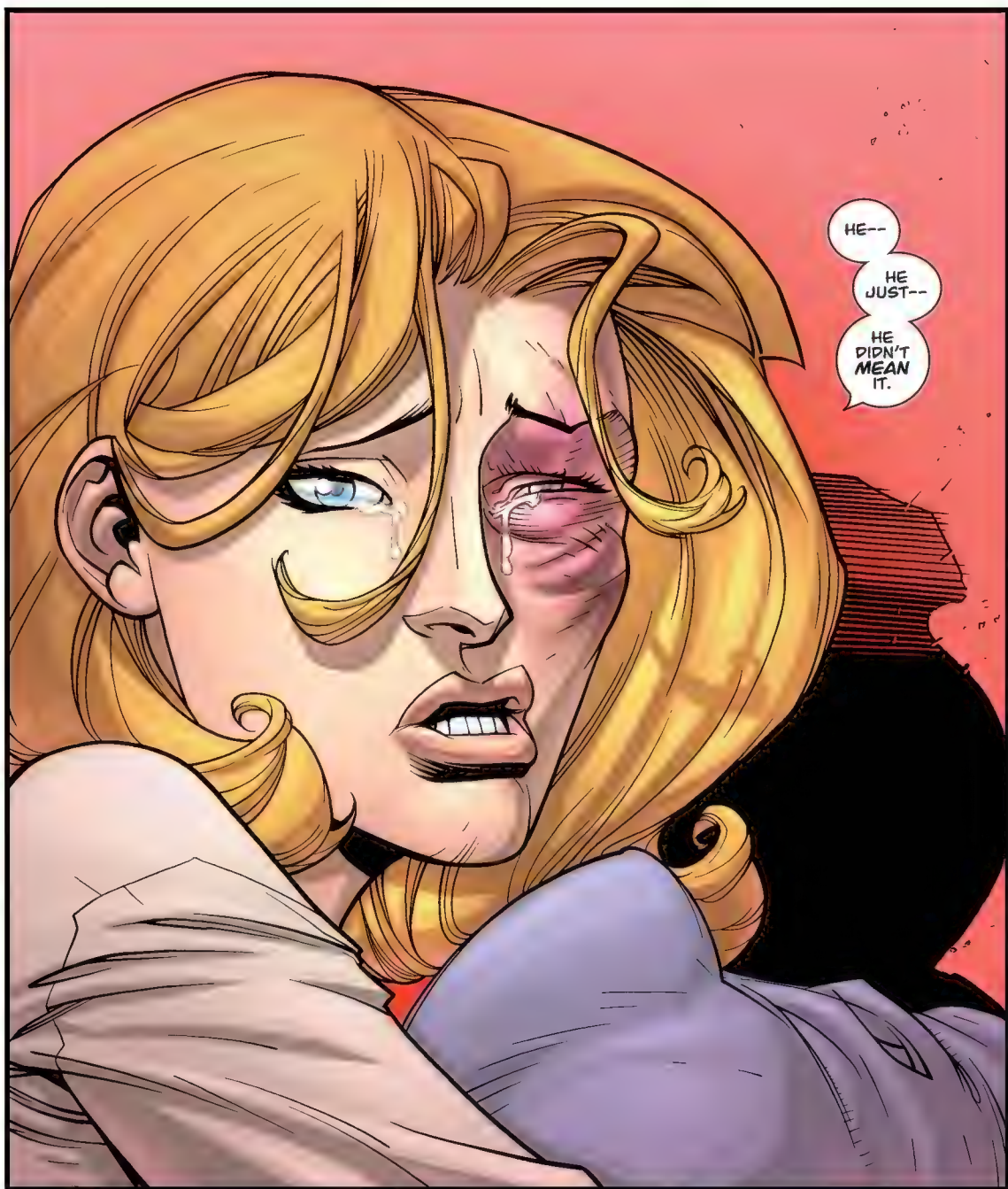


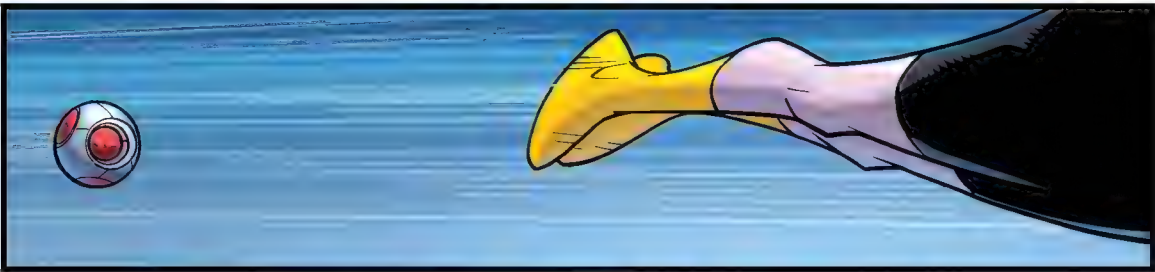
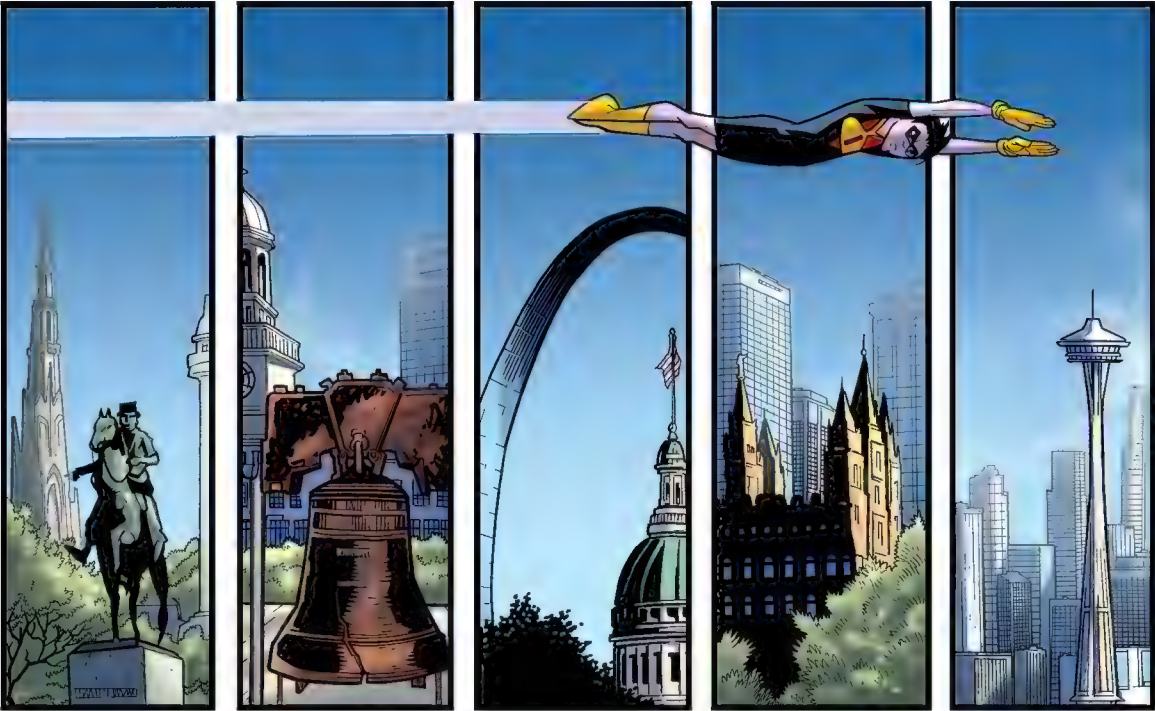


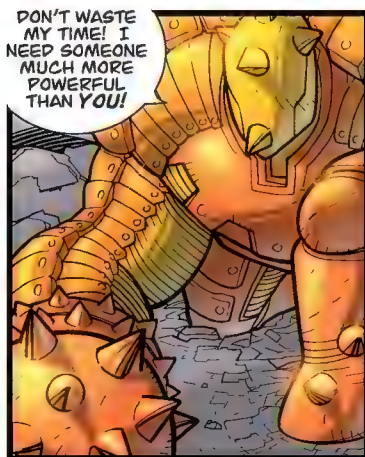
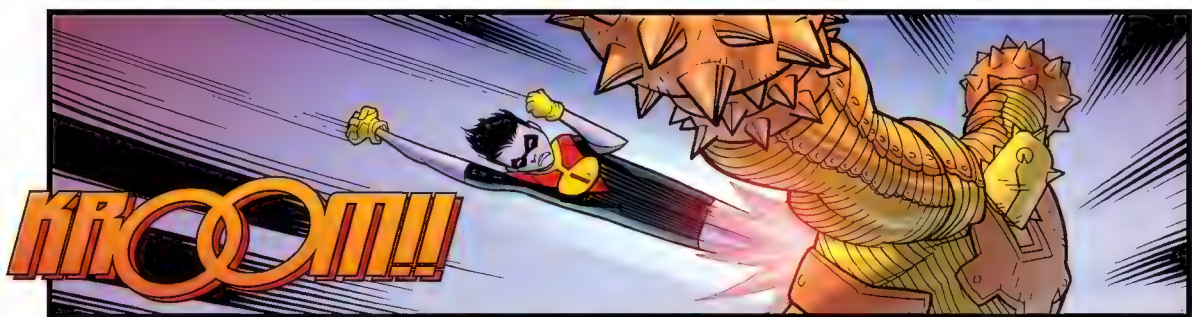












DON'T WASTE MY TIME! I NEED SOMEONE MUCH MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU!

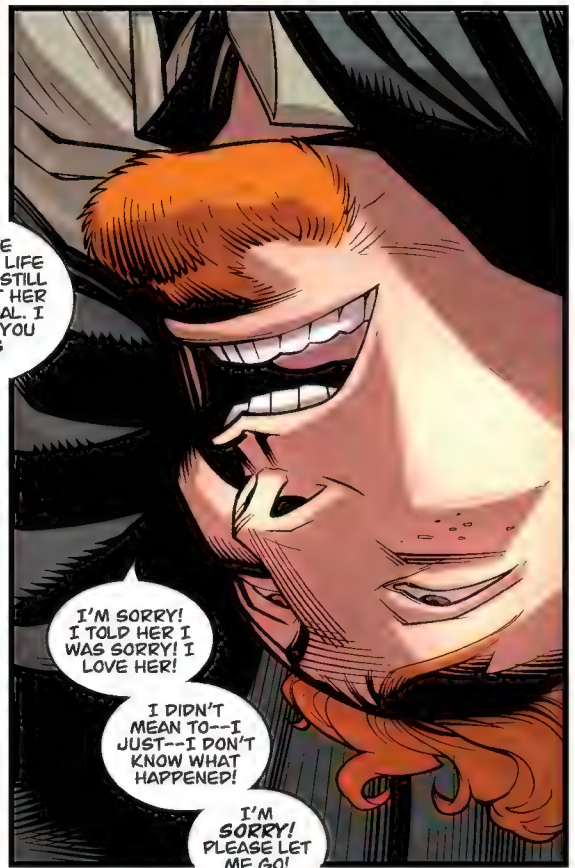


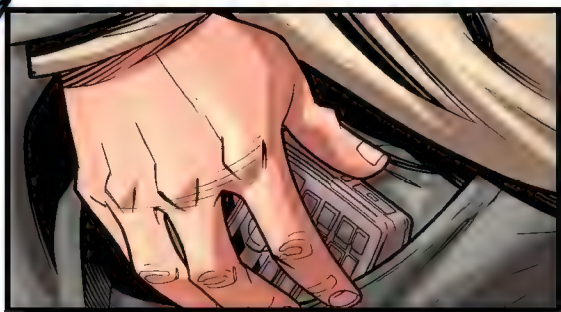
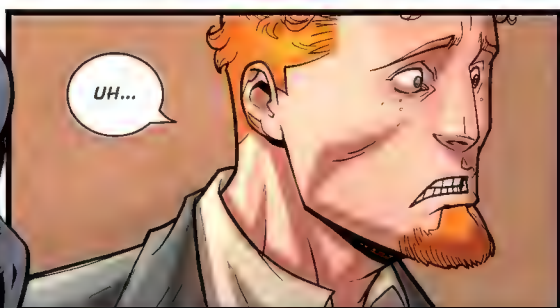
MY MISTAKE.
I WAS HOLDING BACK.

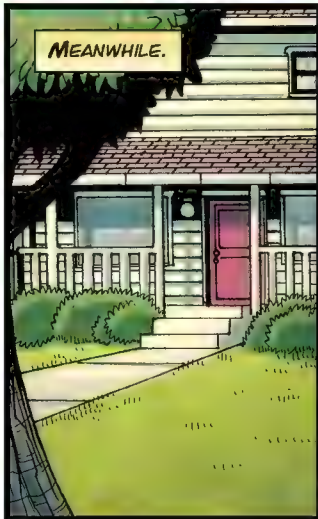


THEN MAYBE YOU ARE STRONG ENOUGH. PLEASE-- LISTEN TO ME, I NEED YOUR HELP, I NEED SOMEONE STRONGER THAN I AM.

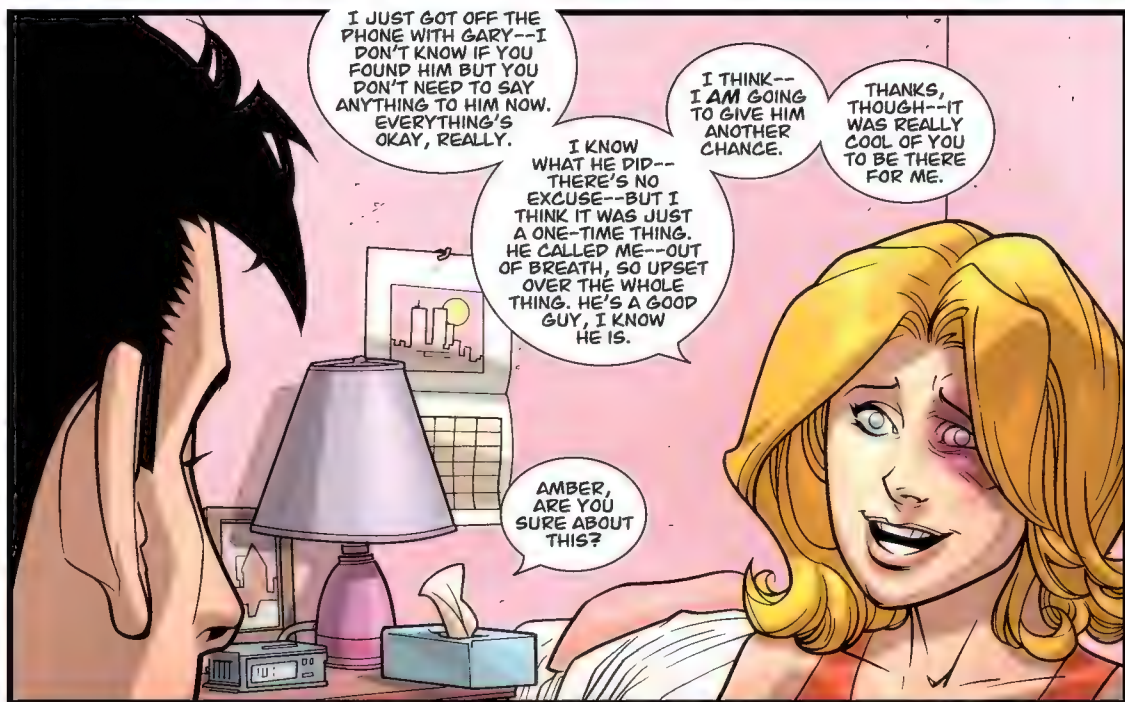
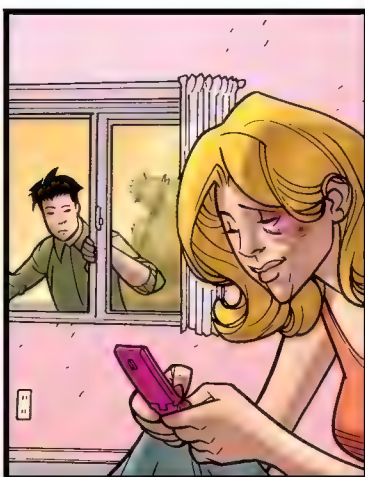
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT!

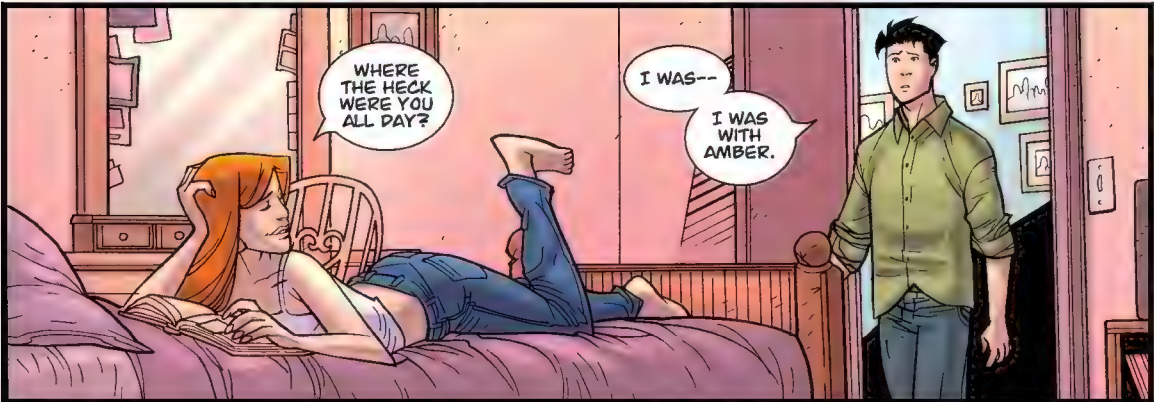
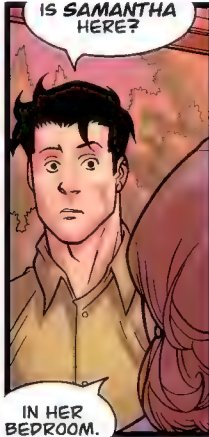
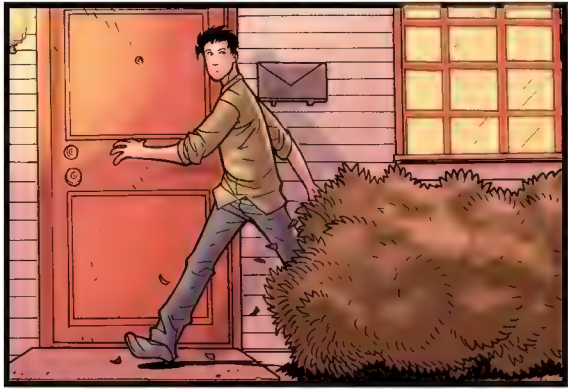
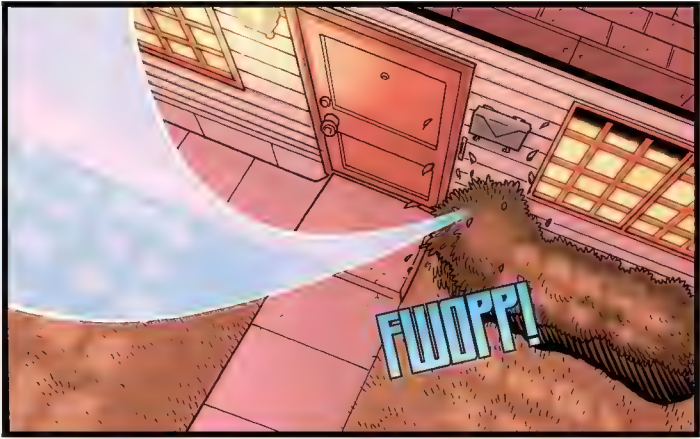
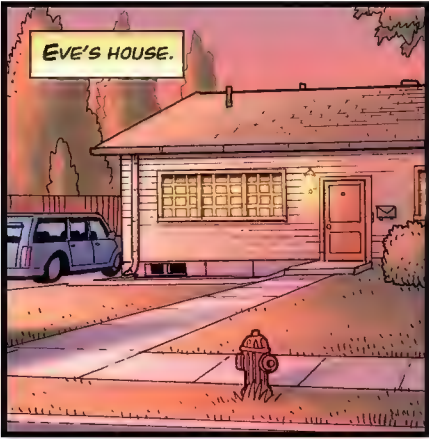


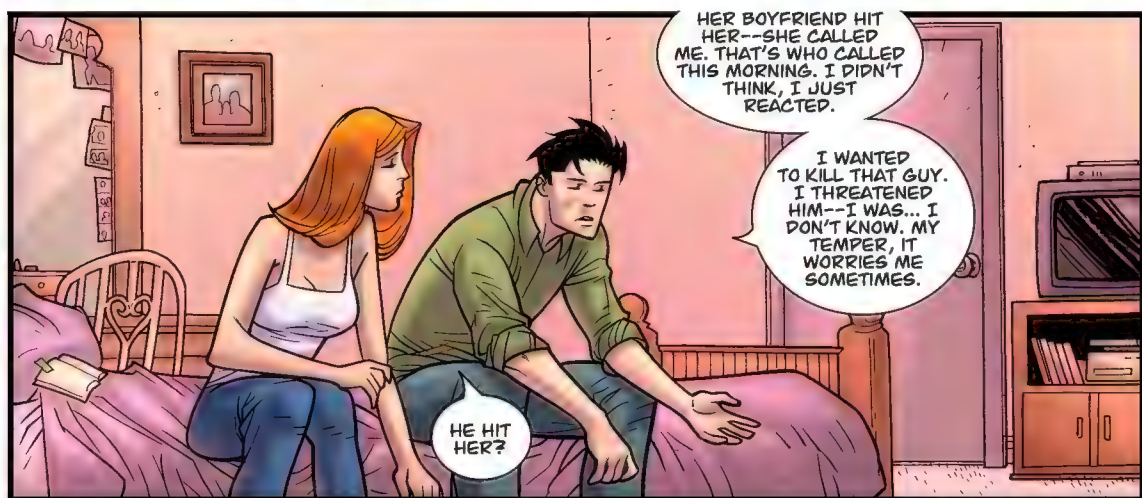
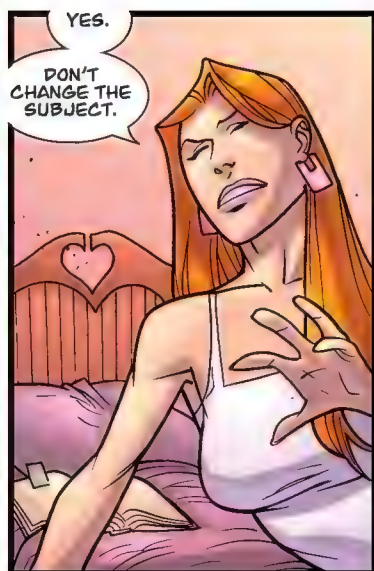


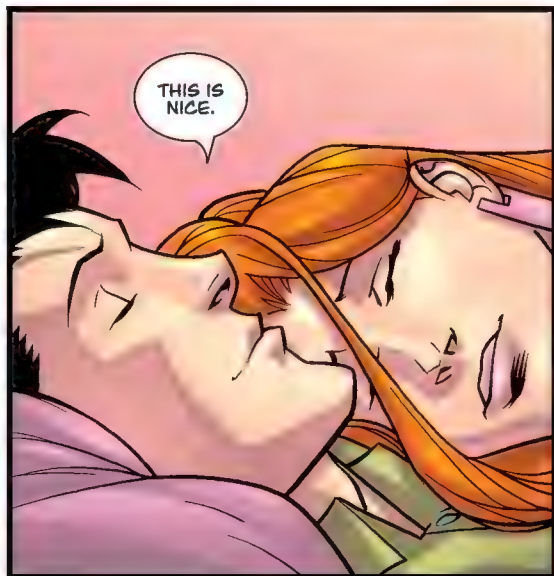
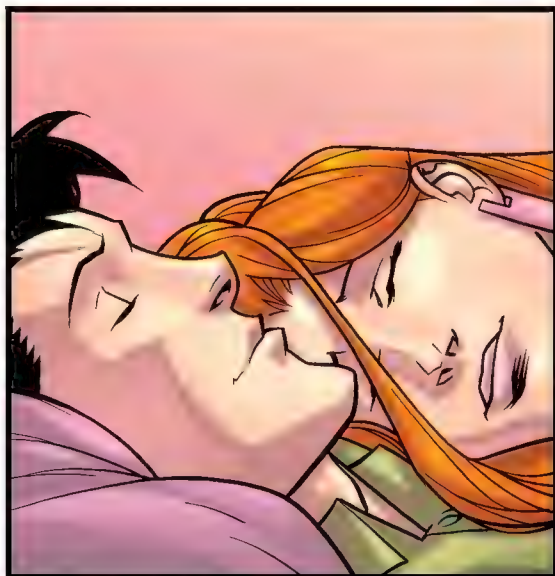
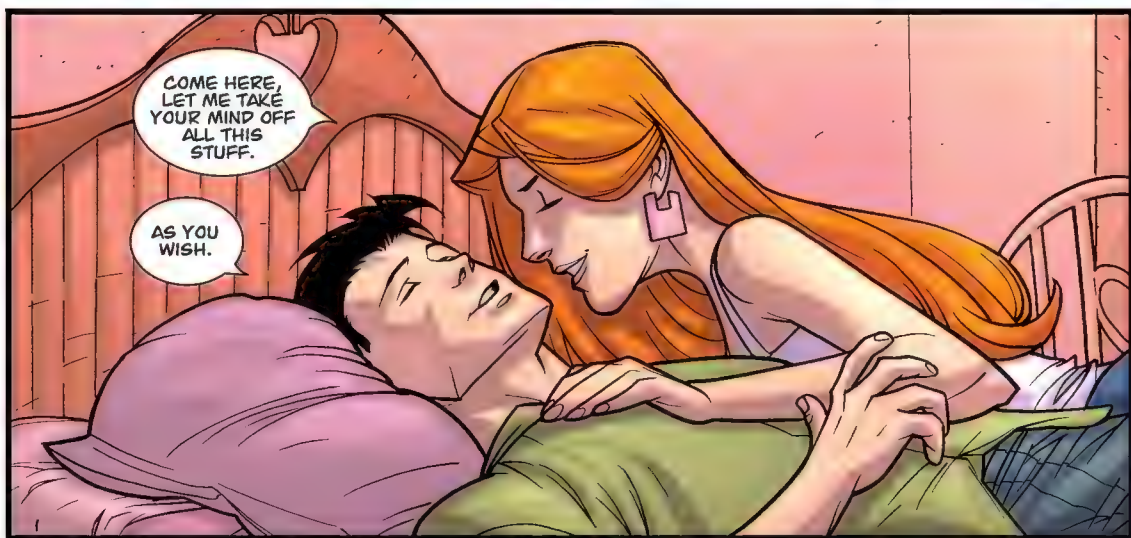
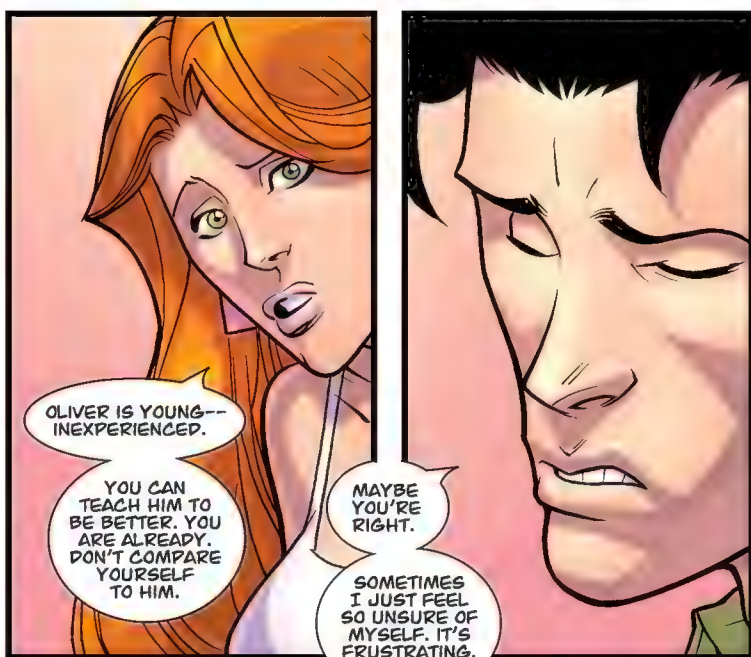


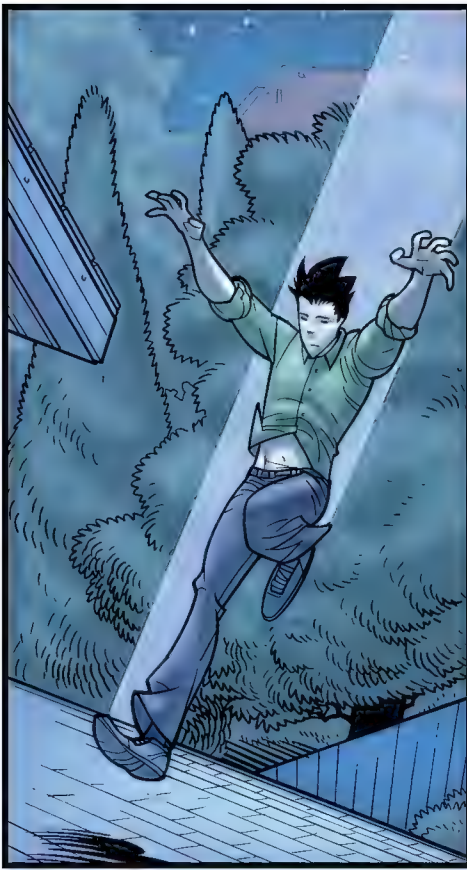




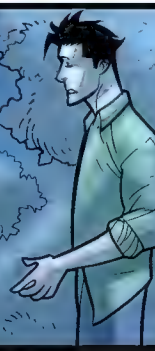








SORRY. I DO A LOT
OF READING AT NIGHT.
I DON'T NEED A LOT
OF SLEEP--GOT THAT
FROM MY MOTHER'S
PEOPLE.



DON'T SWEAT IT,
I'M JUST GLAD
YOU'RE HERE AND
NOT OUT FIGHTING
CRIME ON YOUR
OWN.

ABOUT THAT,
ACTUALLY....

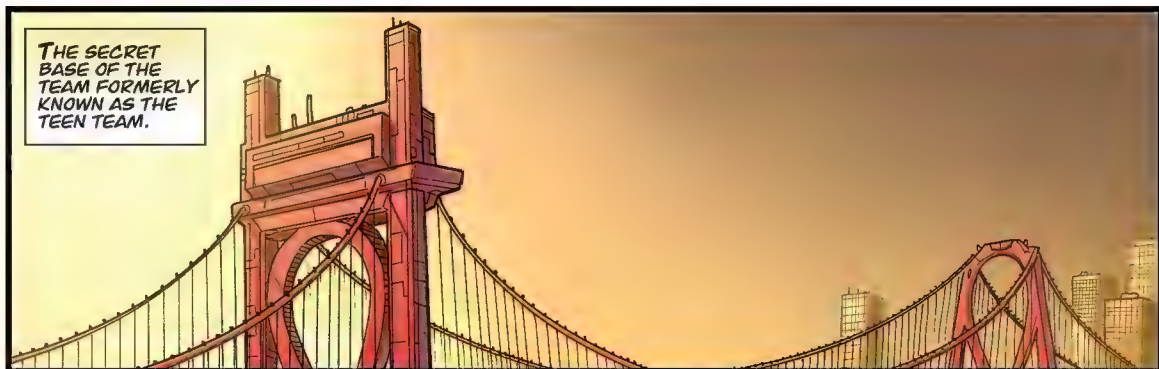






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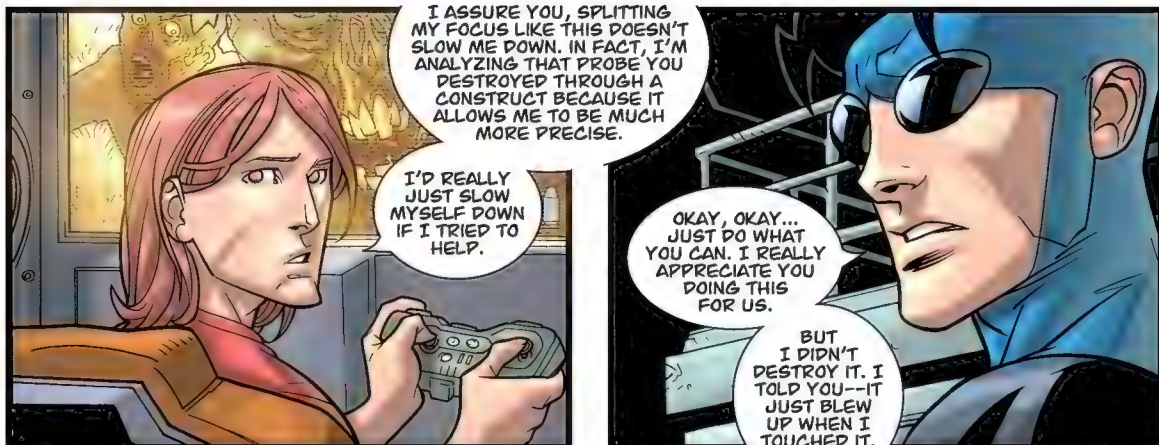


THE SECRET
BASE OF THE
TEAM FORMERLY
KNOWN AS THE
TEEN TEAM.



WE'VE BEEN
HERE ALMOST
ALL DAY. HOW
MUCH LONGER
IS THIS GOING
TO TAKE?

YEAH, ROBOT,
REALLY... WOULD
IT SPEED THINGS
UP IF YOU--I
DON'T KNOW...
HELPED...
YOURSELF?



I ASSURE YOU, SPLITTING
MY FOCUS LIKE THIS DOESN'T
SLOW ME DOWN. IN FACT, I'M
ANALYZING THAT PROBE YOU
DESTROYED THROUGH A
CONSTRUCT BECAUSE IT
ALLOWS ME TO BE MUCH
MORE PRECISE.

I'D REALLY
JUST SLOW
MYSELF DOWN
IF I TRIED TO
HELP.

OKAY, OKAY...
JUST DO WHAT
YOU CAN. I REALLY
APPRECIATE YOU
DOING THIS
FOR US.

BUT
I DIDN'T
DESTROY IT. I
TOLD YOU--IT
JUST BLEW
UP WHEN I
TOUCHED IT.



I SHOULD BE DONE SOON-- I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHEN I AM.



MAN, THAT'S JUST UNSETTLING.



SORRY, FORCE OF HABIT.



CAN I JUMP IN AFTER THIS ROUND?

THINGS WORKING OUT OKAY FOR YOU GUYS SINCE YOU SPLIT AWAY?

HUH?



OH, YEAH--THINGS ARE GOING WELL. WE'RE FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT. WE'VE PUT A FEW SUPER-BADS AWAY.

TOOK DOWN THE ELEPHANT LAST NIGHT-- GUY'S A LOT TOUGHER THAN HE LOOKS. YOU REMEMBER HIM?

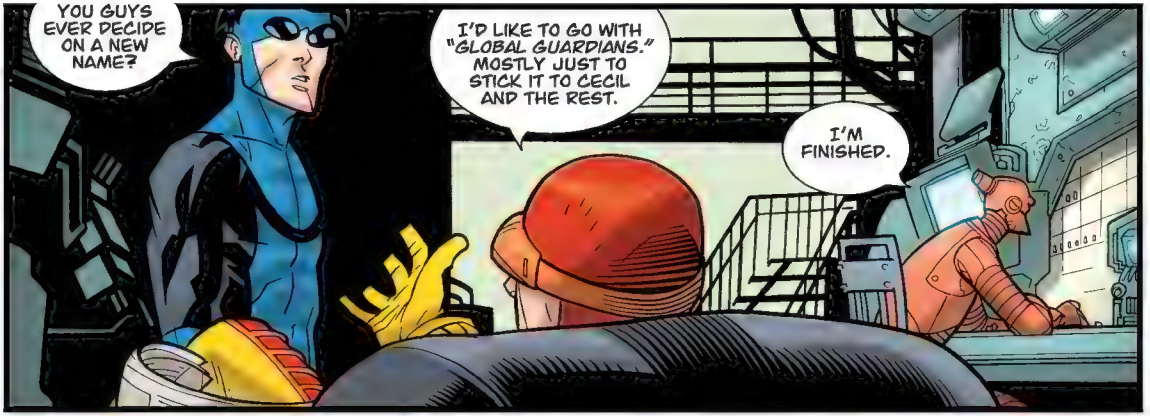


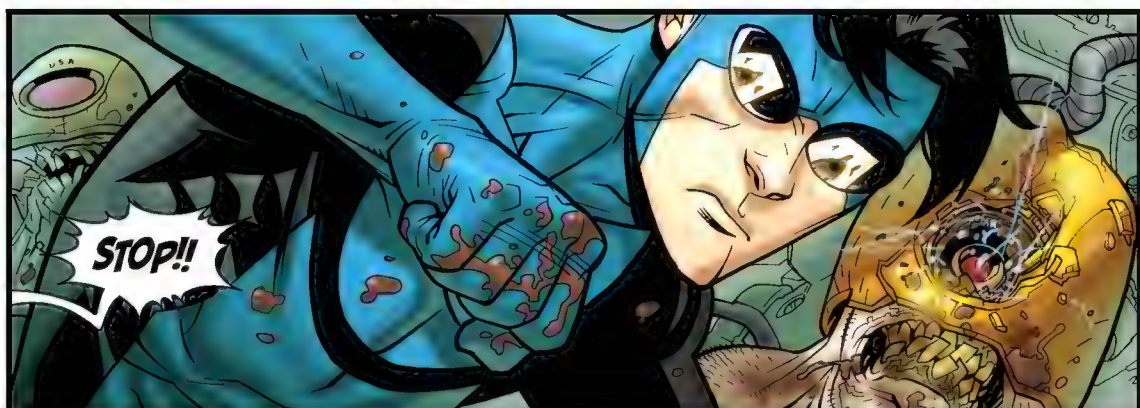
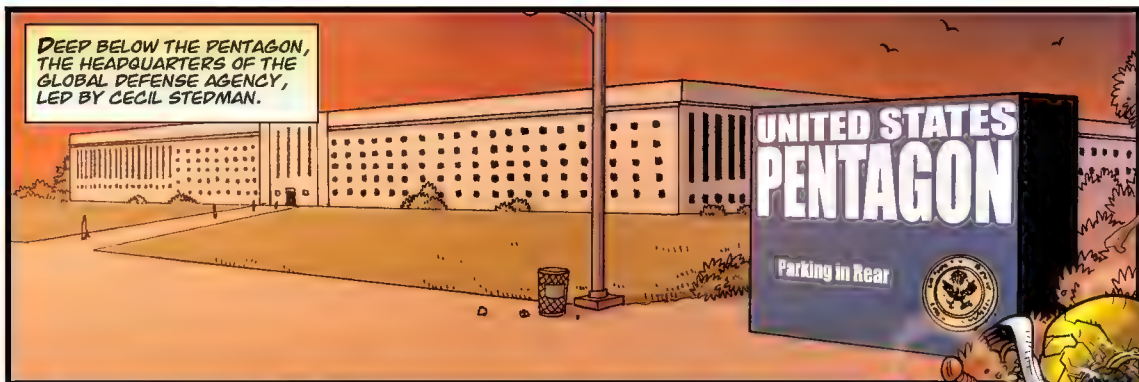
THE ELEPHANT? BARELY--IT GETS HARD TO KEEP TRACK AFTER A WHILE.

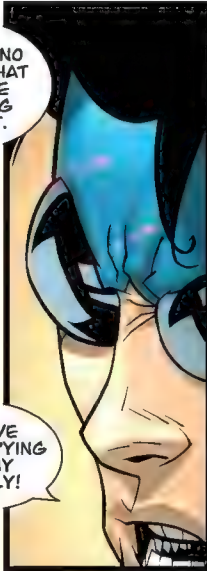


WELL, HE REMEMBERS YOU. APPARENTLY HE WAS HUNTING YOU DOWN OR SOMETHING--GUY TOTALLY HATES YOUR GUTS. I'M SURE YOU'VE RACKED UP A FEW GUYS WHO HATE YOU BY NOW.

YOU SHOULD PROBABLY WATCH OUT.







SOMEWHERE ELSE.

YOU SURVIVED--
GOOD. THAT'S
ANOTHER OF MY
TESTS YOU'VE
SURVIVED.
IMPRESSIVE.

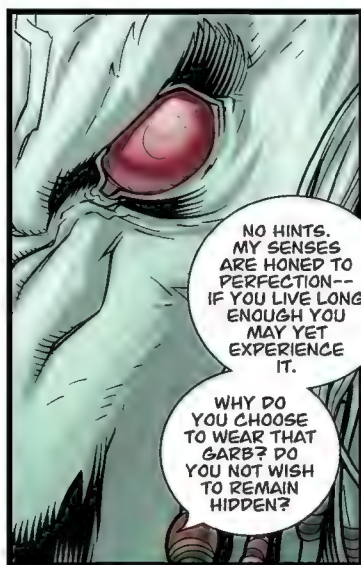
IT WASN'T
EASY... BUT I
MADE IT. WHAT'S
NEXT? I CAN
HARDLY WAIT TO
SEE WHAT YOU
HAVE PLANNED
FOR ME
NOW.

TONIGHT YOUR TEST
WILL NOT COME FROM
ME... THERE ARE
OTHERS WHO CONTROL
YOUR FATE THIS
EVENING.

OTHERS?
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN?

I CAN SENSE IT.
THERE ARE MANY
DANGERS IN
THE FOREST
TONIGHT.

RUNNABLE!!





NO WAY!
ARE YOU
KIDDING
ME?!

OF COURSE
NOT--WHY IN THE
WORLD WOULD I
HELP YOU? I DON'T
WORK FOR YOU, CECIL--
I DON'T LIKE YOU.



GET REAL HERE, KID.
YOU THINK FOR A MINUTE
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SLEEP
TONIGHT KNOWING THIS
GUY IS OUT THERE--
KNOWING WHAT
HE DID?

I KNOW
YOU TOO
WELL.



LOOK, KID--
YOU THINK WE
WANT TO ASK
FOR THIS? I
TRIED TO TAKE
THIS GUY
OUT--AND I
FAILED.

HE'S TOUGH--
BUT YOU COULD
PROBABLY GET
THIS GUY FOR US
IN AN AFTERNOON.



EXCEPT--
Y'KNOW--
I DON'T
TRUST
YOU
PEOPLE!

HAVEN'T YOU WATCHED
THE NEWS? THIS MAN
MURDERED HIS WIFE IN
COLD BLOOD! HIS
DAUGHTER SAW THE
WHOLE THING. HE
ABANDONED HER--
RUINED HER
LIFE!

THIS MAN WAS
A BILLIONAIRE! HE
THOUGHT HE WAS
ABOVE THE LAW.
NOW HE'S OUT THERE--
ROAMING FREE,
ABLE TO KILL
AGAIN.

I COULD
SEND THE
GUARDIANS OF
THE GLOBE--
BUT YOU COULD
FIND HIM FASTER--
YOU COULD STOP
HIM EASIER.



JUST HELP
ME THIS
ONCE--IF YOU
DO, I'LL HAVE
MY PEOPLE
LOOK OVER THIS
ORB YOU THINK
I WAS SPYING
ON YOU WITH--
SEE IF WE CAN'T
FIND OUT WHO'S
WATCHING
YOU, AND WHY.

DEAL?



I DON'T THINK YOU HAVE
ANYONE SMARTER THAN
ROBOT ON STAFF--SO
THAT OFFER DOESN'T
MEAN MUCH.



CRAP--WE'VE GOT
A PROBLEM. THE GIANT
HAS ESCAPED AND
IS ON A RAMPAGE--HE'S
TEARING THROUGH--
WELL--THE EXACT SAME
REGION WOLF-MAN
WAS LAST SEEN.

TWO BIRDS
WITH ONE
STONE?





COULD
HAVE GONE
THE REST OF MY
LIFE WITHOUT
FIGHTING
THIS GUY
AGAIN.

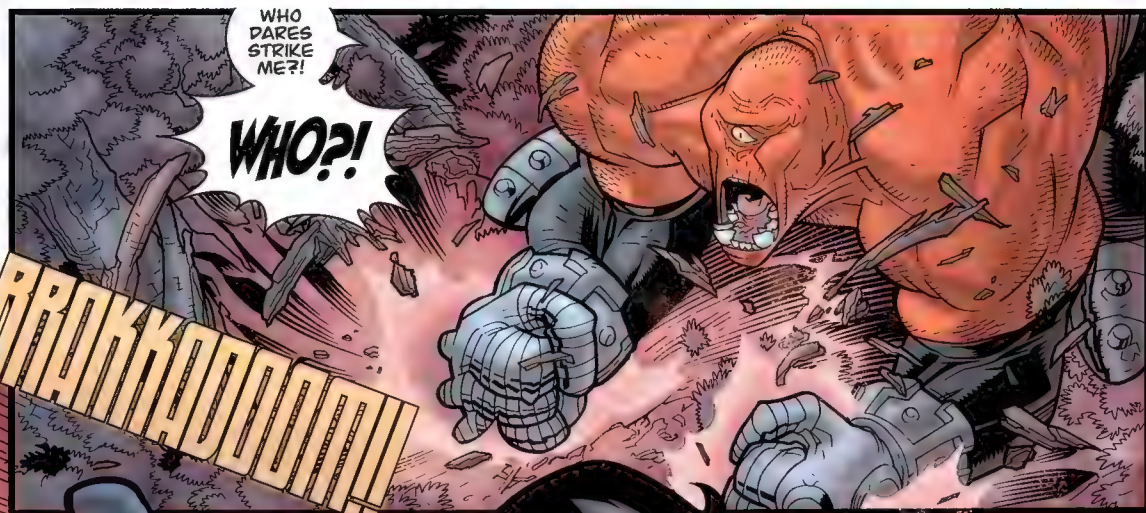
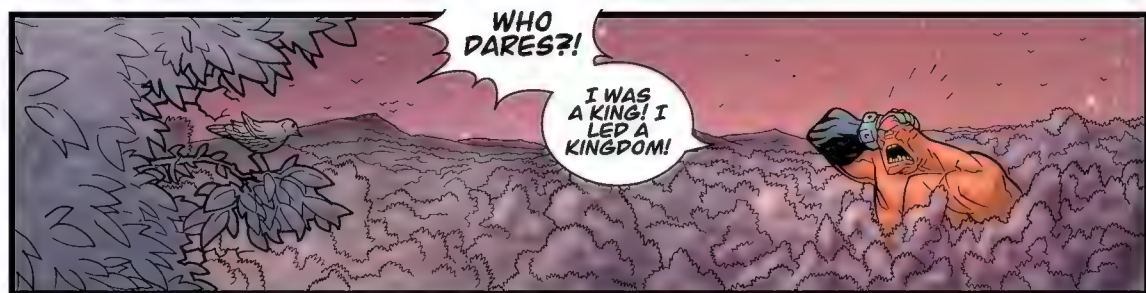


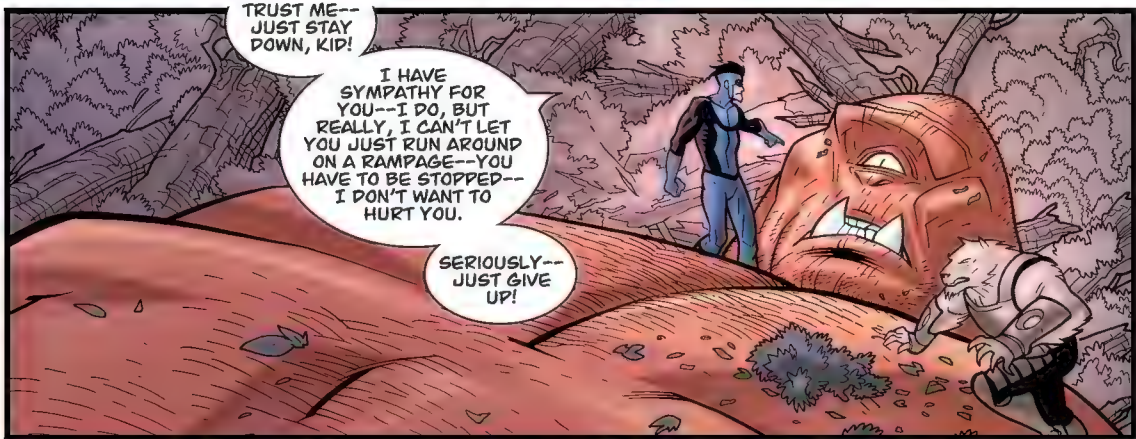
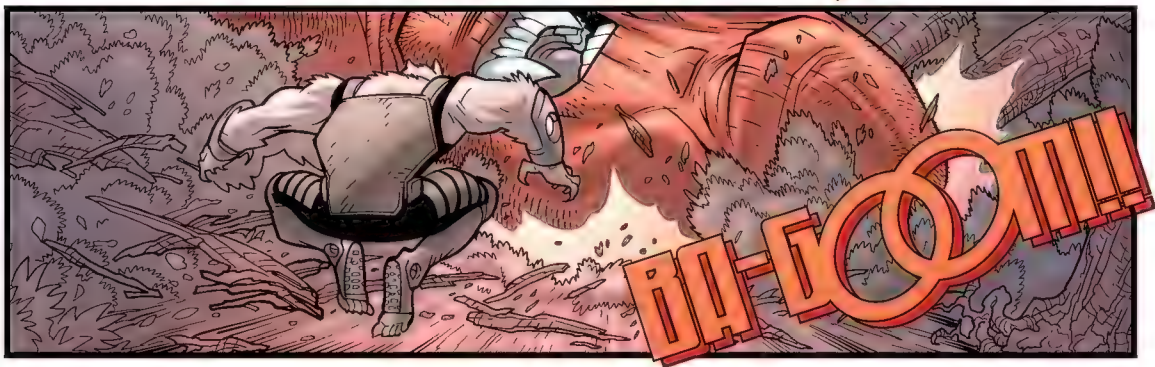
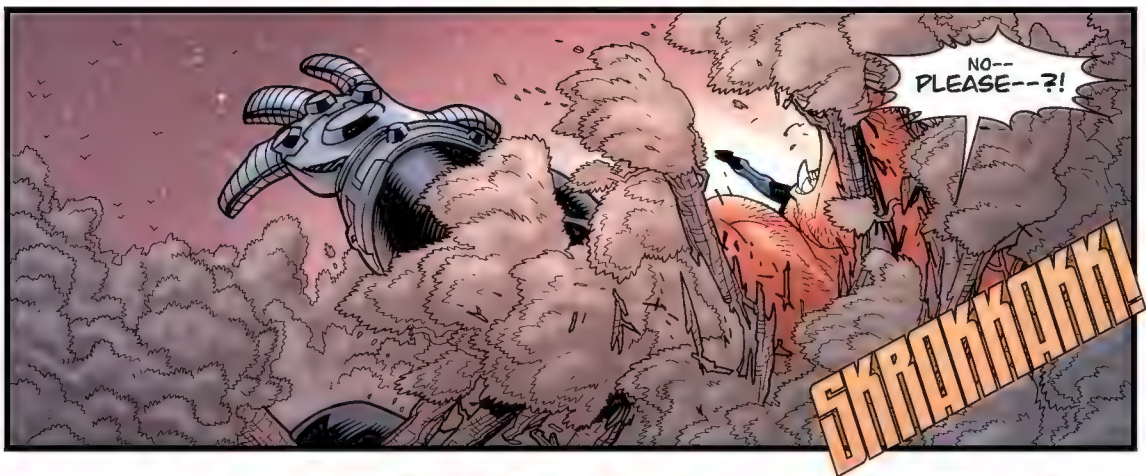
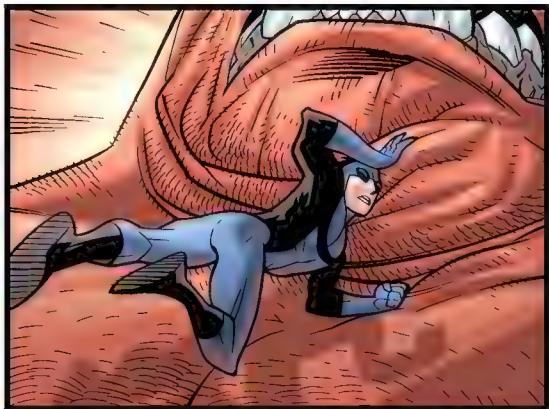
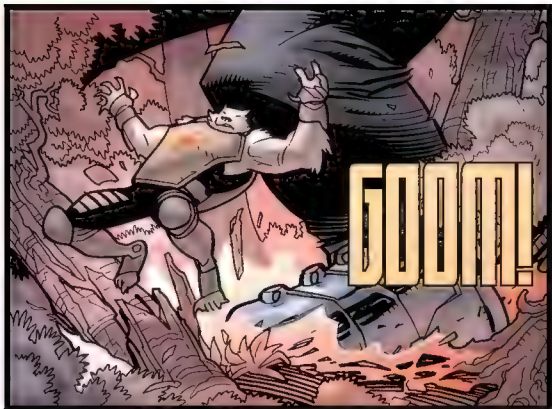
I'VE GOT YOU--
WHAT'S THE
SITUATION
HERE?

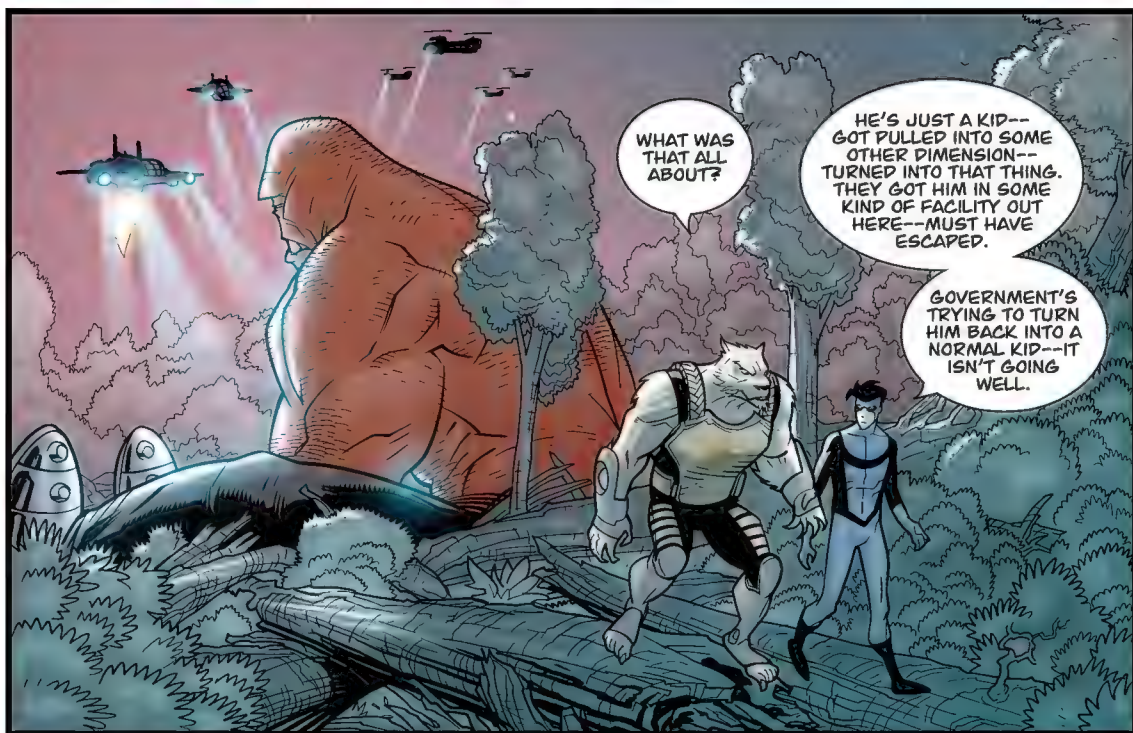
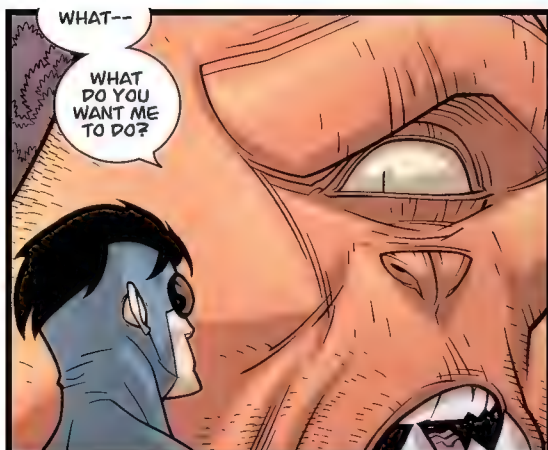
SEEMS
THIS GUY'S
ON HIS WAY
SOMEWHERE--
HE DOESN'T
MAKE A
WHOLE LOT
OF SENSE.

I KNOW
A LITTLE
ABOUT HIM...
NOT MUCH.

I DON'T
KNOW IF HE'S
KILLED ANYONE--
HE TRAMPLED A
FEW TRUCKS--
HE'S BAD NEWS,
I WAS TRYING
TO STOP HIM.

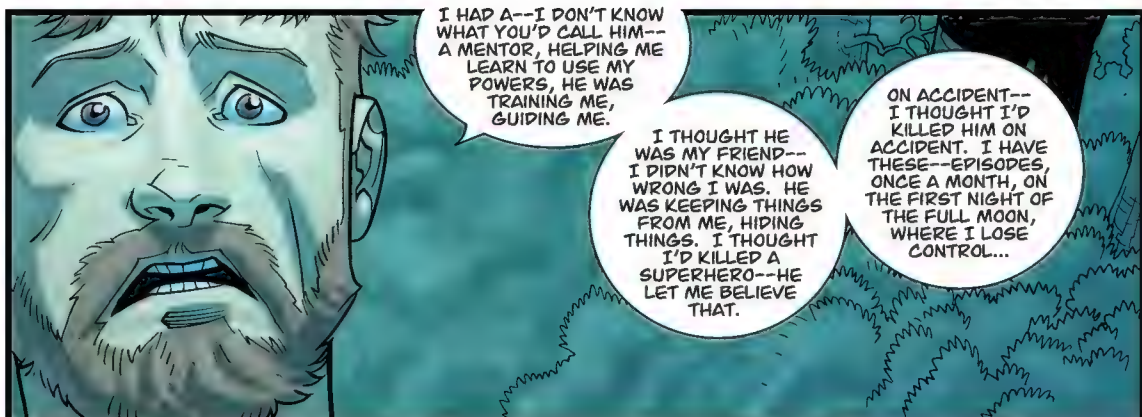












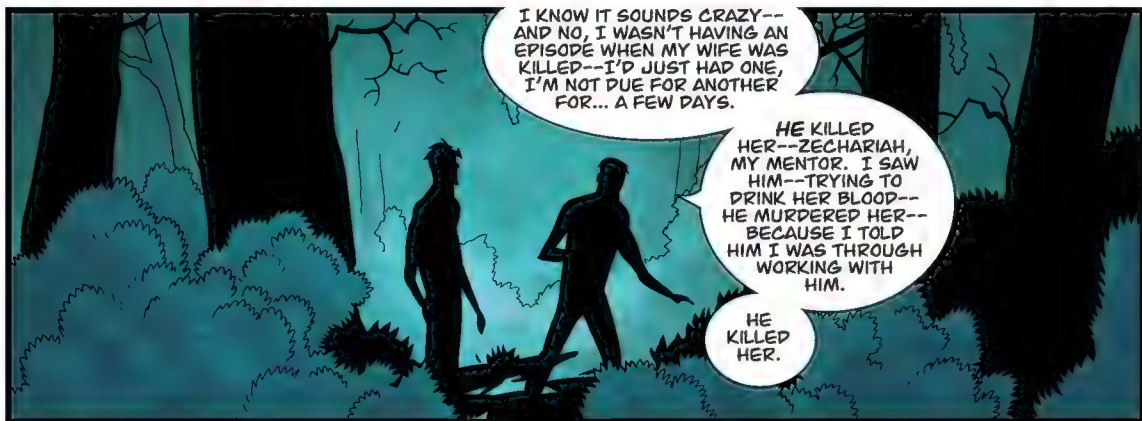
I HAD A--I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'D CALL HIM-- A MENTOR, HELPING ME LEARN TO USE MY POWERS, HE WAS TRAINING ME, GUIDING ME.

I THOUGHT HE WAS MY FRIEND-- I DIDN'T KNOW HOW WRONG I WAS. HE WAS KEEPING THINGS FROM ME, HIDING THINGS. I THOUGHT I'D KILLED A SUPERHERO--HE LET ME BELIEVE THAT.

ON ACCIDENT-- I THOUGHT I'D KILLED HIM ON ACCIDENT. I HAVE THESE--EPISODES, ONCE A MONTH, ON THE FIRST NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON, WHERE I LOSE CONTROL...



I'M LISTENING...



I KNOW IT SOUNDS CRAZY-- AND NO, I WASN'T HAVING AN EPISODE WHEN MY WIFE WAS KILLED--I'D JUST HAD ONE, I'M NOT DUE FOR ANOTHER FOR... A FEW DAYS.

HE KILLED HER--ZECHARIAH, MY MENTOR. I SAW HIM--TRYING TO DRINK HER BLOOD-- HE MURDERED HER-- BECAUSE I TOLD HIM I WAS THROUGH WORKING WITH HIM.

HE KILLED HER.

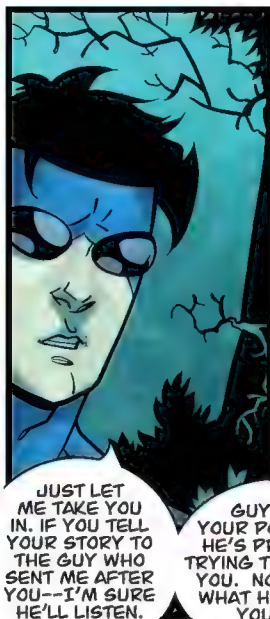


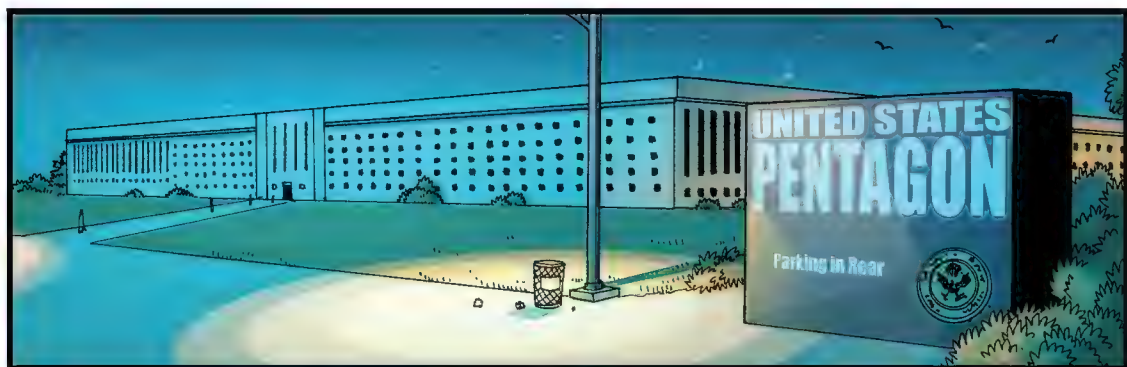
HE KILLED HER.



HE KILLED MY WIFE.

SHE'S DEAD.



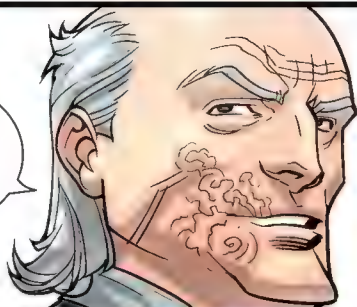


BRAVO, KID.
I KNEW YOU
COULD DO
IT.

AND--
DO MY EYES
DECEIVE ME--
YOU GOT HIM
TO DO IT--
VOLUNTARILY?

DIDN'T
EXPECT
THAT, KID'S
GOOD.

IMPRESSIVE.



THANKS,
BUT HE'S NOT
HERE TO TURN
HIMSELF IN.

HE'S
HERE TO
TALK.



THAT
WASN'T
PART OF
THE DEAL,
KID.

HE CAN
TALK TO HIS
LAWYER.
WE'RE
ARRESTING
HIM.

THEN I'M
CHANGING
THE DEAL. YOU
CAN LISTEN TO
WHAT HE HAS
TO SAY--THAT
DOESN'T HURT
ANYTHING.





AGENT HUNTER,
CAN YOU PLEASE
EXCUSE US?



GOOD LUCK,
MURDERER.



IT'S OKAY--
JUST LET
ME TALK TO
HIM.

ARE YOU TELLING
ME THAT YOU CAN
PARDON MURDERING
PSYCHOPATHS LIKE
PARKWING--BUT
YOU CAN'T EVEN
HEAR HIS
STORY?

THAT'S
INSANE.



NOTHING I CAN
DO HERE, KID. HIS
STORY'S TOO PUBLIC.
THERE'S NO WAY I
CAN HAVE HIM RUNNING
AROUND IN THE CLEAR.
EVERYONE KNOWS WHO
GARY HAMPTON IS--
THE WEREWOLF
SUPERHERO WIFE-
KILLER.

IT'S NOT
LIKE HE COULD
GO BY ANOTHER
NAME OR ANYTHING
EITHER... THE FUR
TENDS TO GIVE
HIM AWAY.

NO, SADLY--
HE'S USELESS TO
ME. I'VE GOT TO
BE PRACTICAL HERE,
INVINCIBLE. IF HE'S
GOT A STORY TO
TELL--HE CAN
TELL IT TO A
JURY.



THIS GUY
ISN'T A KILLER--
I ARRIVED TO
SEE HIM RISKING
HIS LIFE TRYING
TO SAVE PEOPLE
FROM THE GIANT--
TRUST ME--HE'S
ONE OF THE
GOOD GUYS.

I'M NOT
LETTING YOU
ARREST HIM!



I KNOW
YOU TOO
WELL.

DIDN'T
YOU WONDER
WHY I HAD
YOU MEET ME
IN THE WHITE
ROOM?



OH,
GREAT.

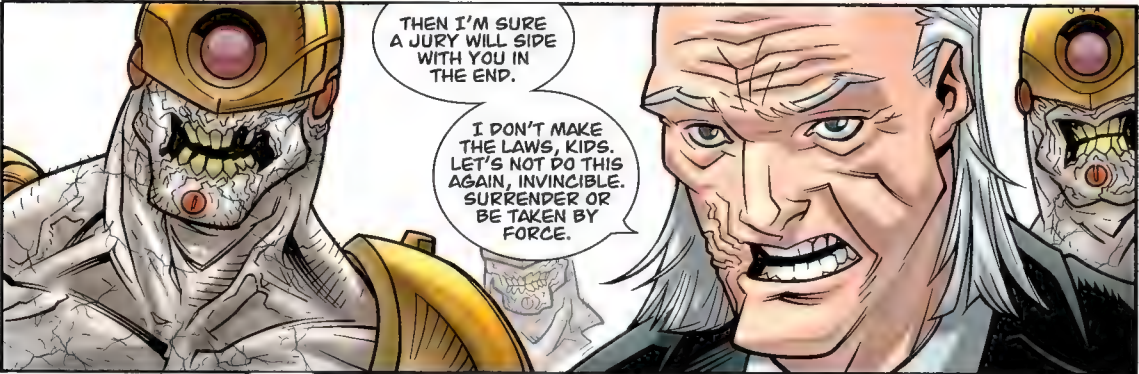
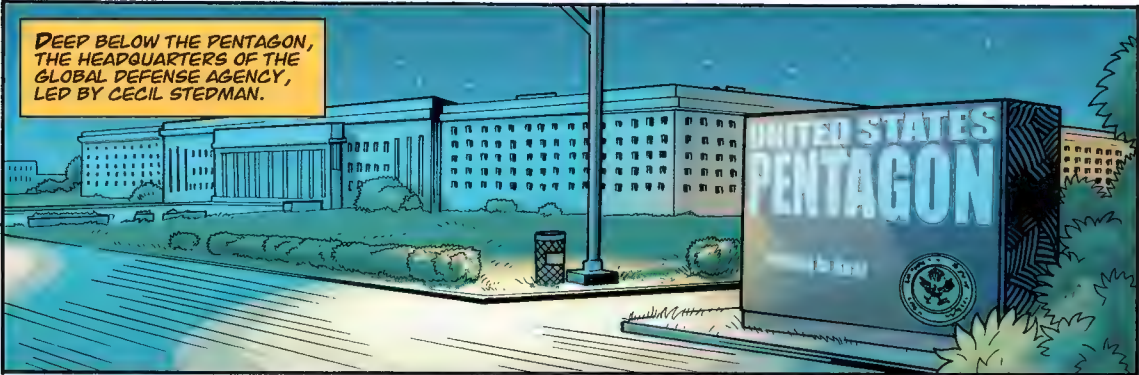
THIS
AGAIN.

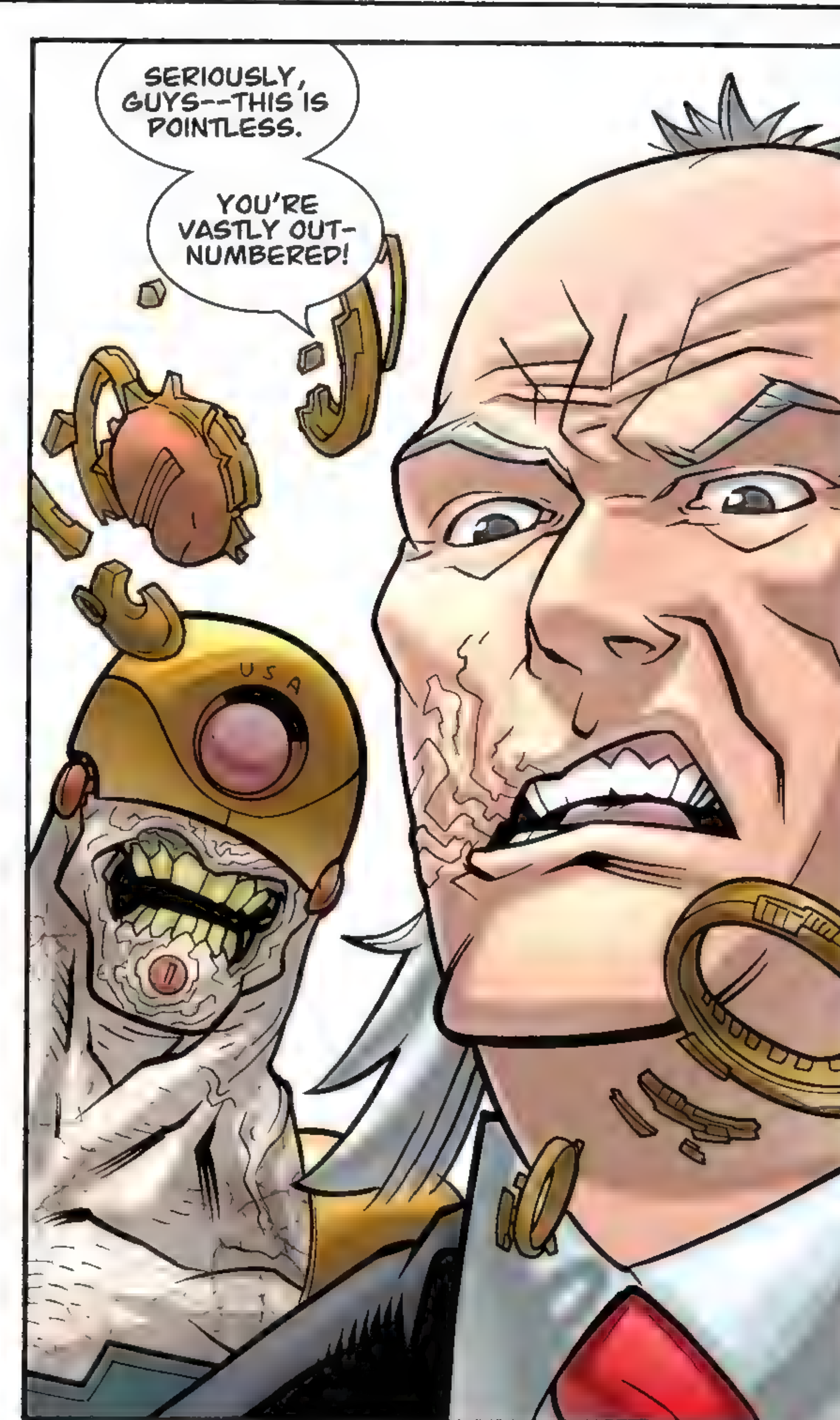


ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN

II

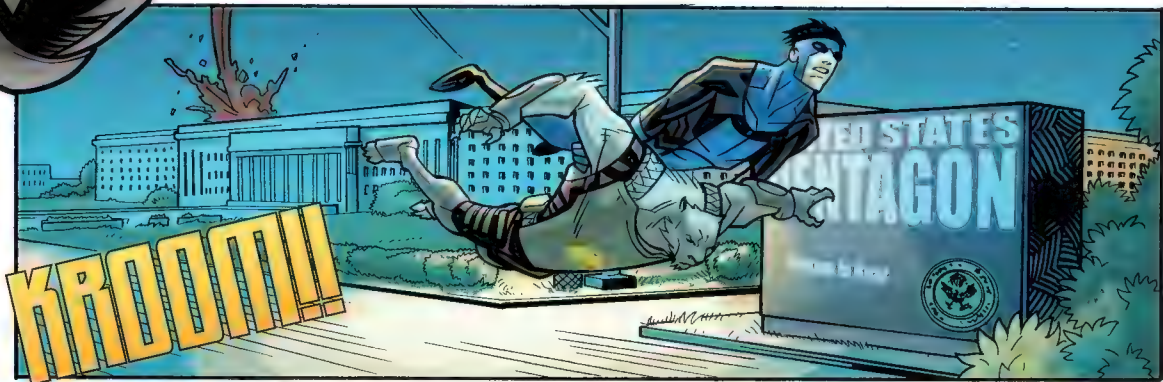








THE
WAY--IS
UP!



THIS IS
UNCOMFORTABLE.

I GET
THAT A
LOT.



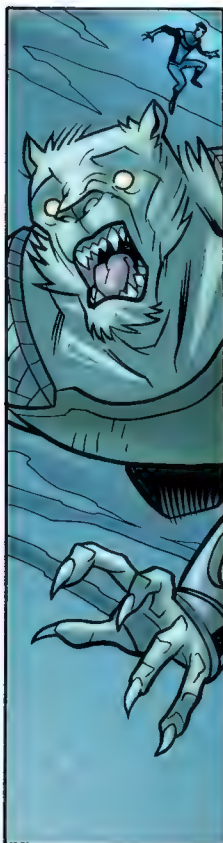
I REALLY APPRECIATE YOU GOING TO BAT FOR ME BACK THERE.

I HOPE IT DOESN'T GET YOU IN TOO MUCH TROUBLE.

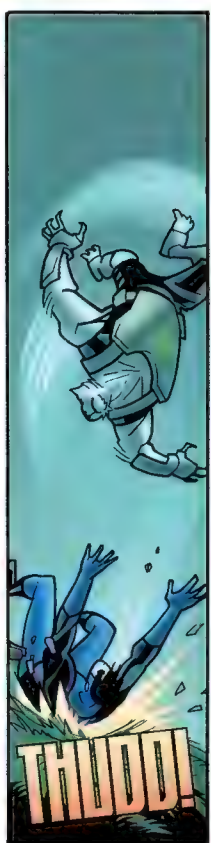


I'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER. WE'RE--

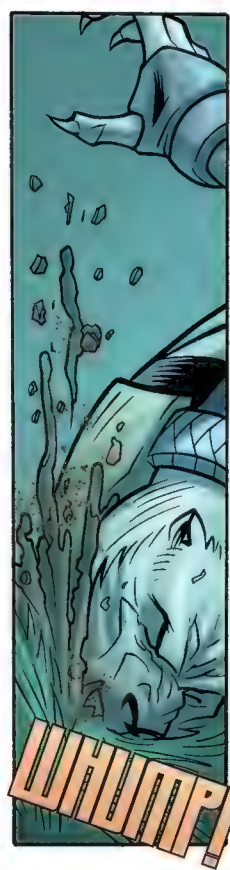
KROOM!



VOOSH!



THUD!

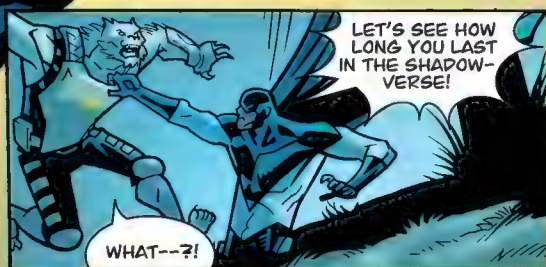
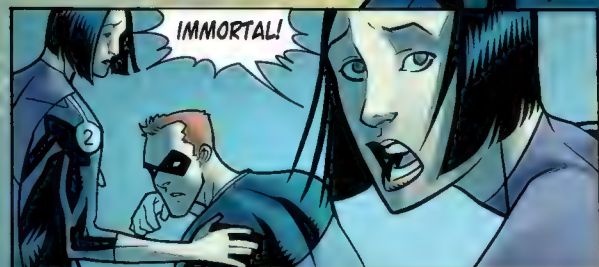


WHUMP!

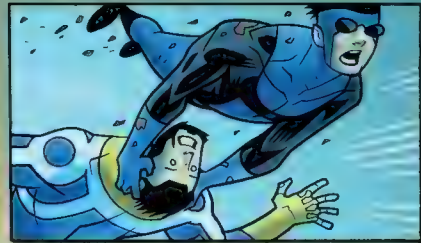


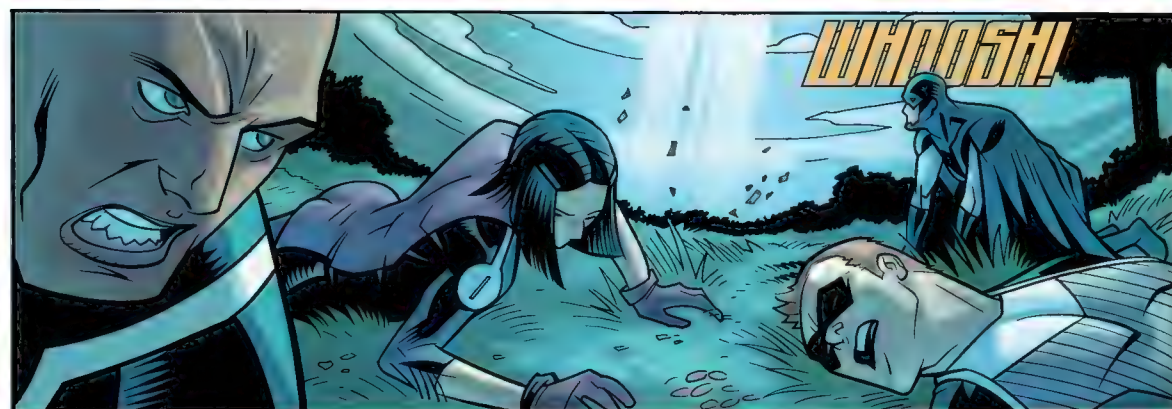
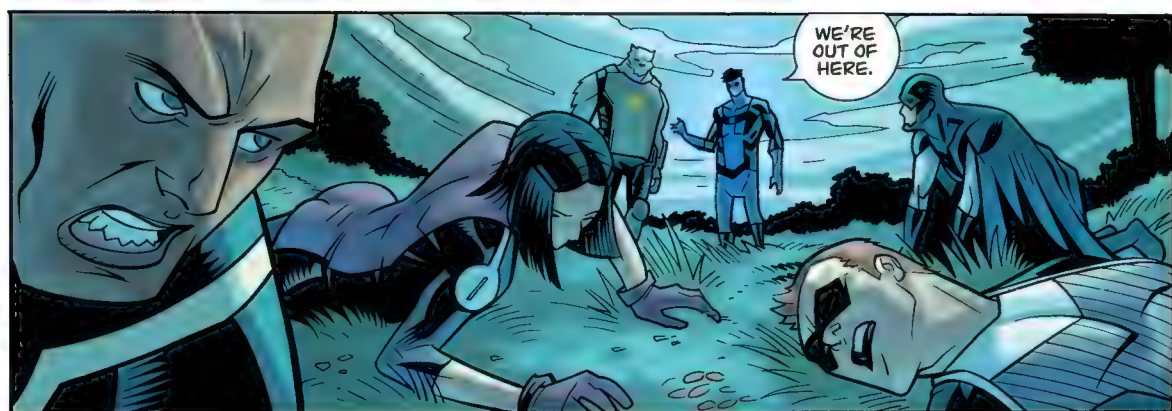
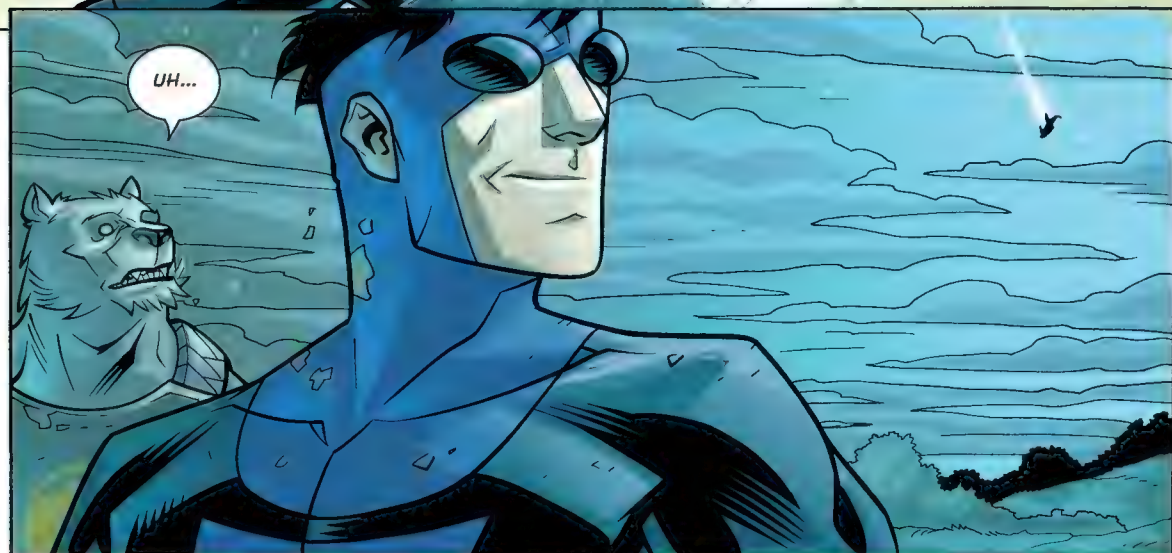














COOL.
I THINK
WE LOST
THEM.

GREAT.



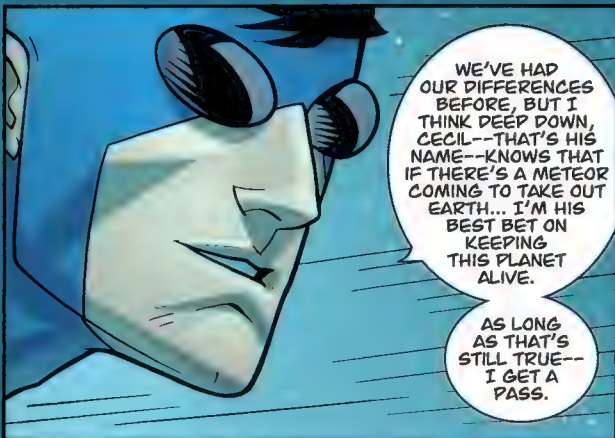
THAT TOTALLY
DID NOT WORK
OUT THE WAY I
THOUGHT IT
WOULD.

I'M
REALLY
SORRY
ABOUT
THAT.



YOU
COULDN'T
HAVE PLANNED
FOR THAT--DON'T
WORRY ABOUT IT.
I JUST HOPE I
DIDN'T GET YOU IN
TROUBLE WITH
SCAR FACE
BACK
THERE.

I DON'T
WANT THEM
HUNTING
YOU DOWN
BECAUSE
OF ME.



WE'VE HAD
OUR DIFFERENCES
BEFORE, BUT I
THINK DEEP DOWN,
CECIL--THAT'S HIS
NAME--KNOWS THAT
IF THERE'S A METEOR
COMING TO TAKE OUT
EARTH... I'M HIS
BEST BET ON
KEEPING
THIS PLANET
ALIVE.

AS LONG
AS THAT'S
STILL TRUE--
I GET A
PASS.



STILL,
THANKS FOR
STICKING YOUR
NECK OUT FOR
ME--MEANS
A LOT.



DON'T
MENTION
IT.

...

SO...
WHERE
TO?

THE HAMPTON ESTATE.



WHEN
SHE SAW ME
HOLDING MY
WIFE'S BODY...
I KNEW--

I KNEW
SHE THOUGHT
I'D KILLED
HER.



I DIED MYSELF,
THAT VERY
INSTANT... MY
LIFE WAS
OVER.

GETTING
CAUGHT--WHAT
THOSE PEOPLE
WILL DO TO ME--
NONE OF THAT
SCARES ME. THAT'S
NOT WHY I RAN. I
NEED TIME TO
SET THINGS
STRAIGHT...

...TO SHOW
HER SHE
STILL HAS A
FATHER.



AND HE'S
STILL OUT
THERE--THE
MAN WHO DID
KILL YOUR
WIFE?



SOMEWHERE,
YEAH. I DON'T
KNOW WHERE.

I NEVER
KNEW WHERE
HE WENT WHEN
WE WEREN'T
WORKING
TOGETHER--HE
ALWAYS FOUND
ME.



HE'S
STILL OUT
THERE.

ZECHARIAH--



YOU
TRIPPED
THE SILENT
ALARM.

I KNOW.
WHAT TOOK
YOU SO
LONG?



I SAW
THAT IT WAS
YOU ON THE
SECURITY FEED.
THOUGHT I'D
GIVE YOU A
MOMENT
ALONE...

...AND I
HAD TO FIND
MY ROBE.

WHO'S
YOUR
FRIEND?



INVINCIBLE,
THIS IS MY
FRIEND
DUNFORD.

NICE
TO MEET
YOU.



AND THE
SAME TO
YOU.

I SUPPOSE
I HAVE YOU TO
THANK FOR THIS
VISIT. IT'S GOOD
TO SEE YOU,
GARY.



ARE YOU...
OKAY?





I'M TRYING TO BE SUPPORTIVE, I KNOW SHE'S GOING THROUGH A LOT--BUT I WAS NEVER CUT OUT TO BE A PARENT. I DON'T KNOW IF I'M DOING WHAT SHE NEEDS.

I'M GIVING HER SPACE. SHE DOESN'T SPEND A LOT OF TIME HERE. SHE'S STILL GOING TO SCHOOL, BUT HER GRADES ARE SUFFERING.

THE SCHOOL KNOWS THE SITUATION--THEY'RE BEING VERY UNDERSTANDING.

SHE'S JUST SO... ANGRY. SHE DOESN'T TALK TO ME... I'VE TRIED TO GET HER TO OPEN UP TO ME--BUT NOTHING SEEMS TO WORK. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.



DOES SHE THINK I...?



SHE DOES. SHE THINKS YOU LOST CONTROL--WENT INTO A RAGE AND REBECCA...

I HAVEN'T TALKED TO HER ABOUT IT--MAYBE I SHOULD--



NO!

I'LL MAKE THIS RIGHT. IF YOU TRY TO CONVINCE HER I DIDN'T KILL HER MOTHER IT'LL JUST DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN YOU. SHE'S NOT READY TO BELIEVE YOU.

SHE HAS NO REASON TO.



I'LL GIVE HER THE REASON TO BELIEVE ME. I'LL SHOW HER THE KIND OF MAN THAT I AM--THE KIND OF MAN I'VE ALWAYS BEEN.

I JUST NEED TIME. DUNFORD, JUST GIVE ME THE TIME TO PROVE TO HER.

I'LL BRING DOWN ZECHARIAH-- EXPOSE HIM FOR WHAT HE IS--AND SHE'LL HAVE TO BELIEVE ME.

I'LL GET MY LITTLE GIRL BACK.



I'LL GIVE YOU AS MUCH TIME AS YOU NEED.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME, GARY.



WHEN THE TIME COMES, I'LL HELP OUT IN ANY WAY I CAN.

I REALLY WISH I COULD HELP MORE. I'M VERY SORRY.



DON'T BE. YOU'VE HELPED ENOUGH. BRINGING ME HERE--TRYING TO CLEAR THINGS WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

I ALMOST HATE TO ASK, BUT I DO NEED ONE MORE THING FROM YOU.



NAME IT.

I NEED YOU TO GET ME OUT OF HERE.



YOU'RE SURE YOU WANT ME TO BRING YOU BACK HERE?

THEY KNOW YOU WERE HERE-- WON'T THEY COME HERE AGAIN TO ARREST YOU?

MAYBE THEY WILL... I'VE GOT MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT.



IT'S IMPORTANT I STAY HERE-- I'M LEARNING THINGS.



I REALLY SHOULD BE GETTING BACK--MY GIRLFRIEND'S PROBABLY WONDERING WHY I HAVEN'T CALLED HER TONIGHT.

GOOD LUCK.

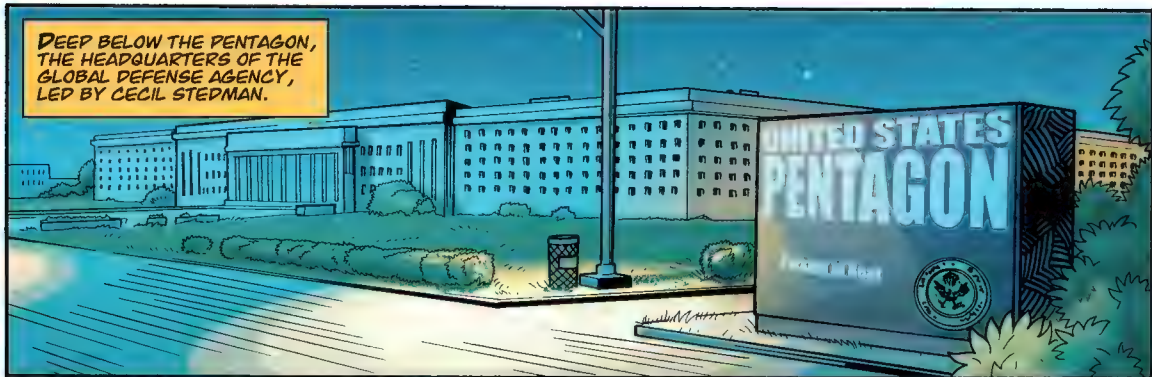


WHO WAS THAT?

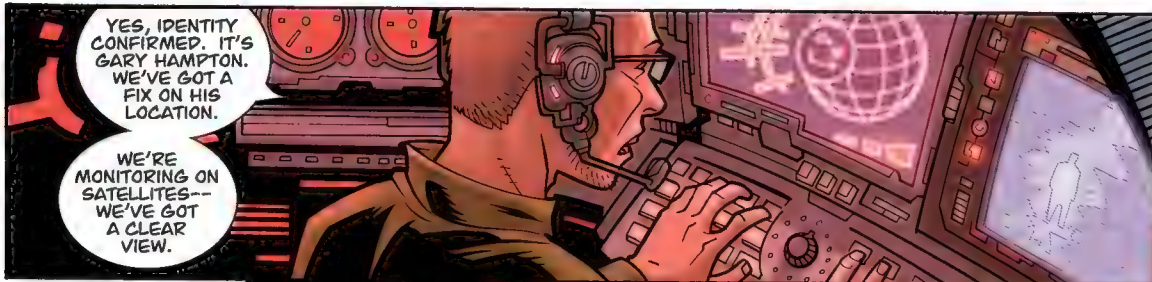


SOMETHING I THOUGHT I MIGHT NEVER HAVE AGAIN...

...A FRIEND.



DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON,
THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE
GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY,
LED BY CECIL STEPMAN.



YES, IDENTITY
CONFIRMED. IT'S
GARY HAMPTON.
WE'VE GOT A
FIX ON HIS
LOCATION.

WE'RE
MONITORING ON
SATELLITES--
WE'VE GOT
A CLEAR
VIEW.



STAND BY FOR
INSTRUCTIONS.

NO.

WE KNOW
WHERE HE IS--
WE'LL KEEP
HIM UNDER
SURVEILLANCE.

I'M STILL
DECIDING WHAT
TO DO WITH HIM.
HE MAY STILL
PROVE USEFUL
TO ME...

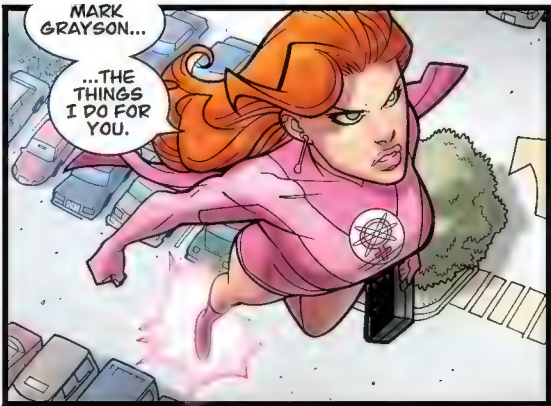
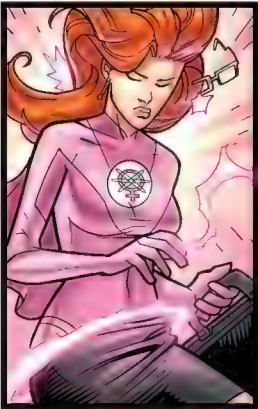
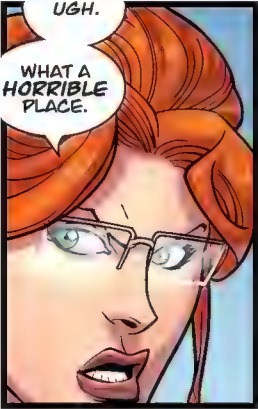
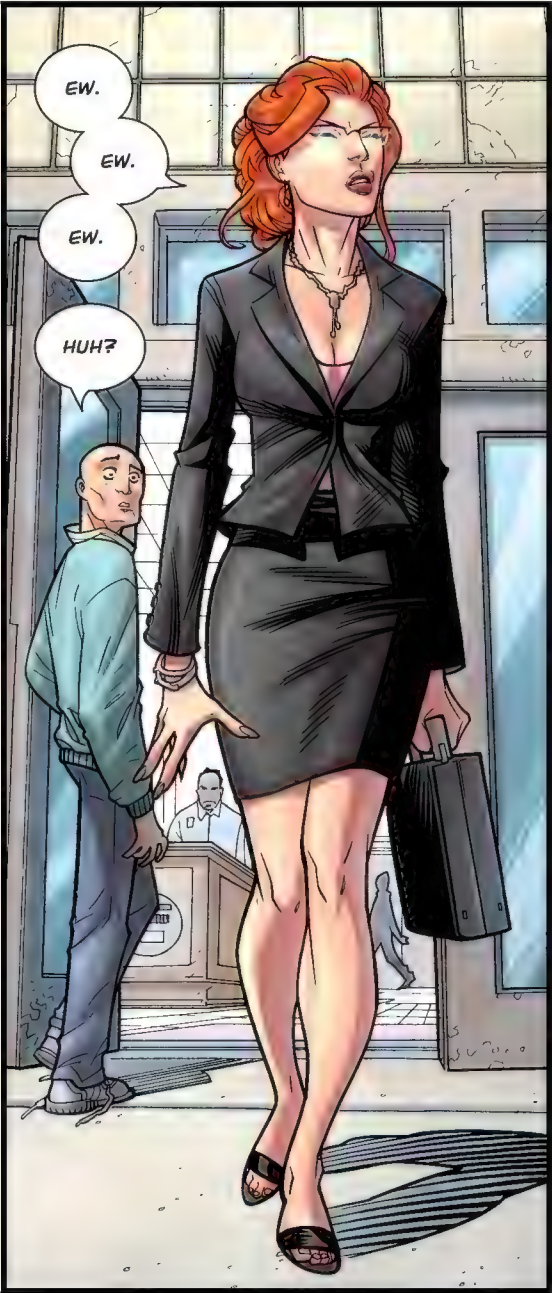
YOU
WANT ME
TO GO
IN?

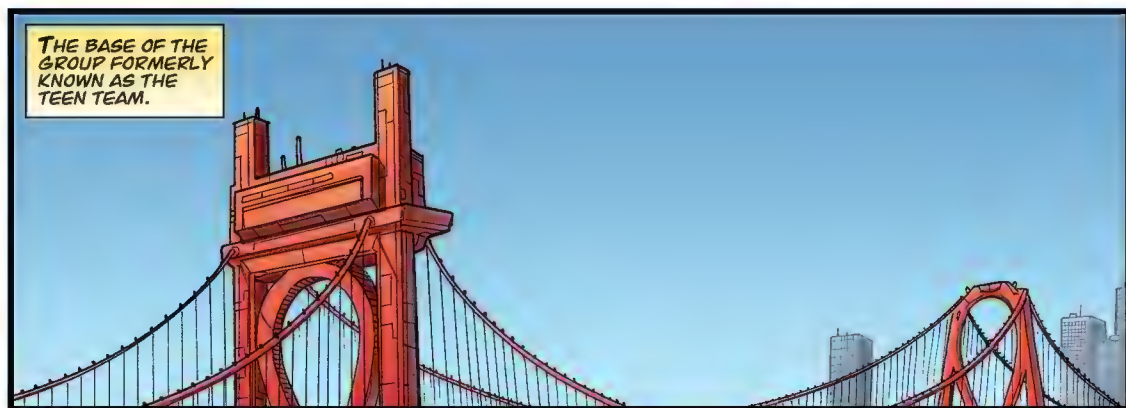


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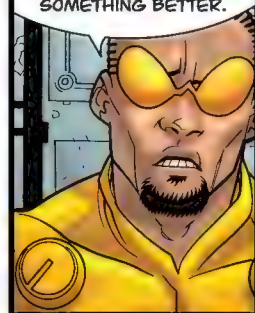
GLOBAL GUARDIANS!
THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD
CALL OURSELVES.



OH, PLEASE.
HOW MANY TIMES
DID WE DO SOMETHING
OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTRY
WHEN WE WERE WITH THE
GUARDIANS? TWICE?
THREE TIMES?



I DON'T LIKE THE NAME,
EITHER. IT SOUNDS
SILLY. I THINK WE CAN
COME UP WITH
SOMETHING BETTER.



THEN WHY DON'T YOU
SUGGEST SOMETHING.
STOP CRAPPING ALL
OVER MY IDEAS AND
SUBMIT SOME OF
YOUR OWN!



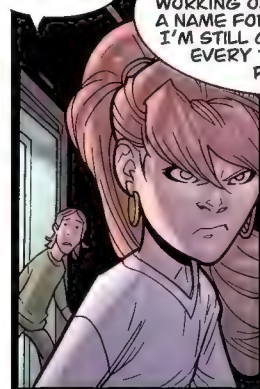
IS THE NAME
OF OUR STUPID
TEAM REALLY
THIS
IMPORTANT?!

WHO
CARES?!



AMANDA?

I'M PISSED, OKAY?! WE'RE
WORKING ON COMING UP WITH
A NAME FOR OUR TEAM WHILE
I'M STILL GETTING YOUNGER
EVERY TIME I USE MY
POWERS!

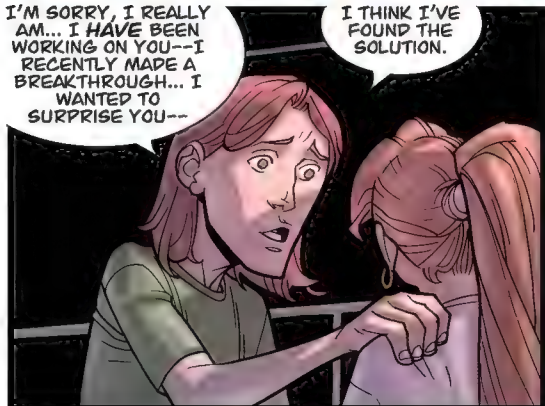


YOU SAID
YOU'D FIX ME,
RUDY! YOU WERE
CONFIDENT! DAMN
IT, I BELIEVED
IN YOU!



I'M SORRY, I REALLY
AM... I HAVE BEEN
WORKING ON YOU--I
RECENTLY MADE A
BREAKTHROUGH... I
WANTED TO
SURPRISE YOU--

I THINK I'VE
FOUND THE
SOLUTION.

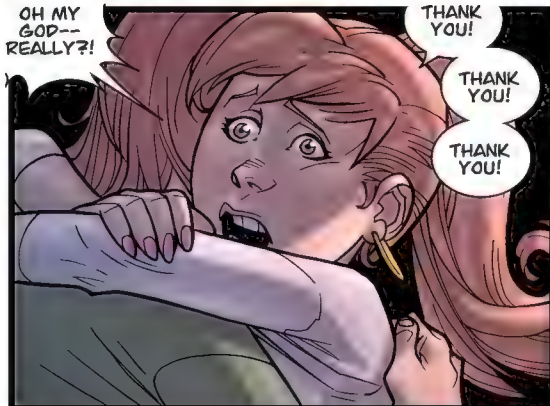


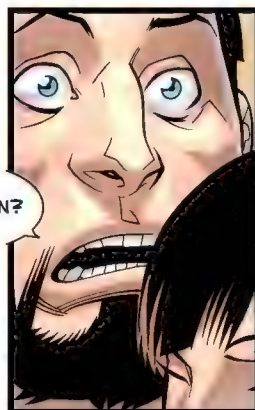
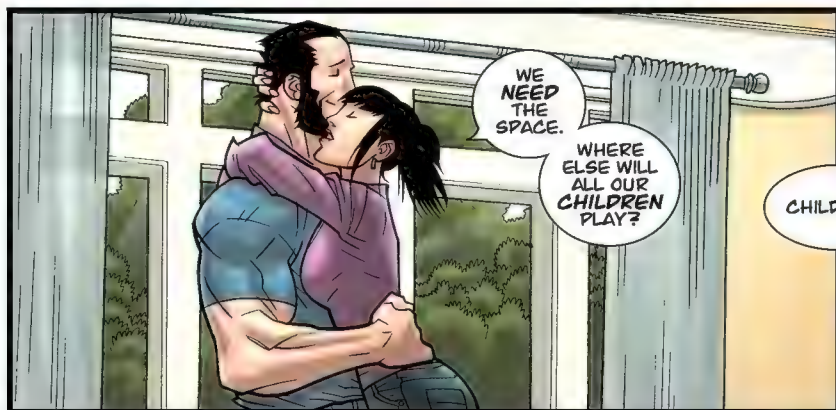
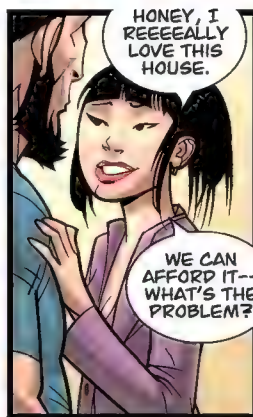
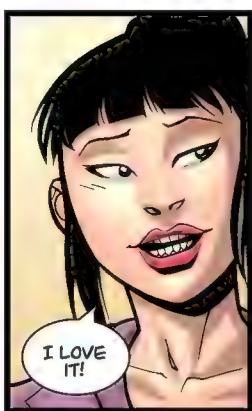
OH MY
GOD--
REALLY?!

THANK
YOU!

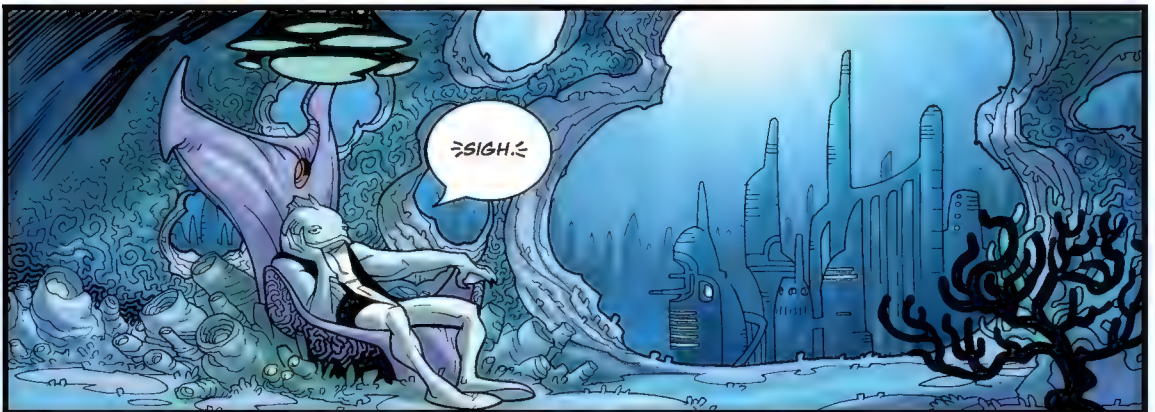
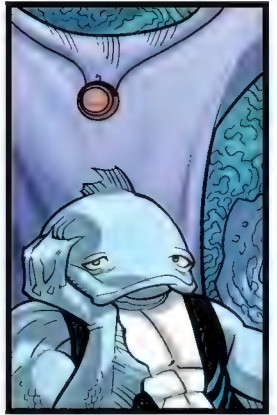
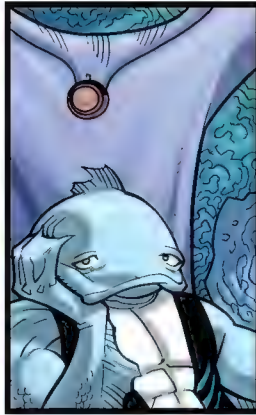
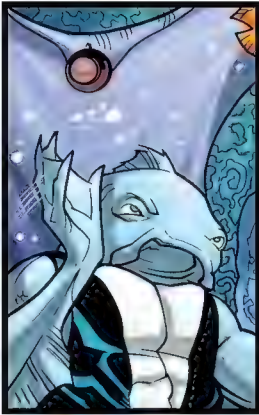
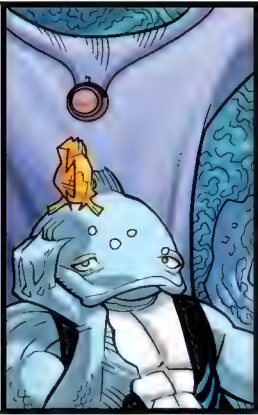
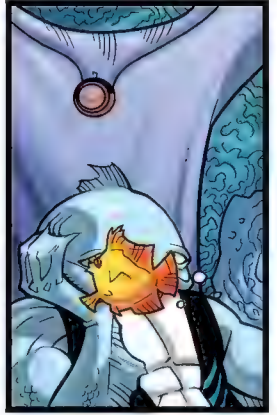
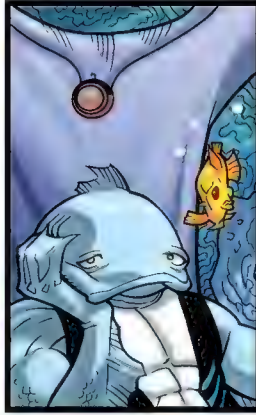
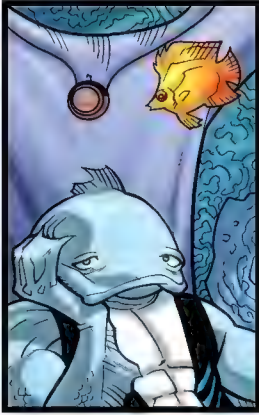
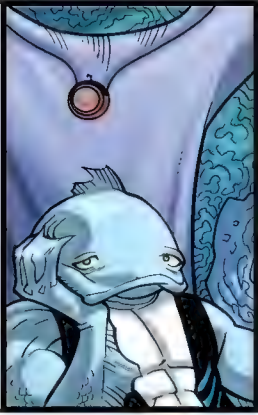
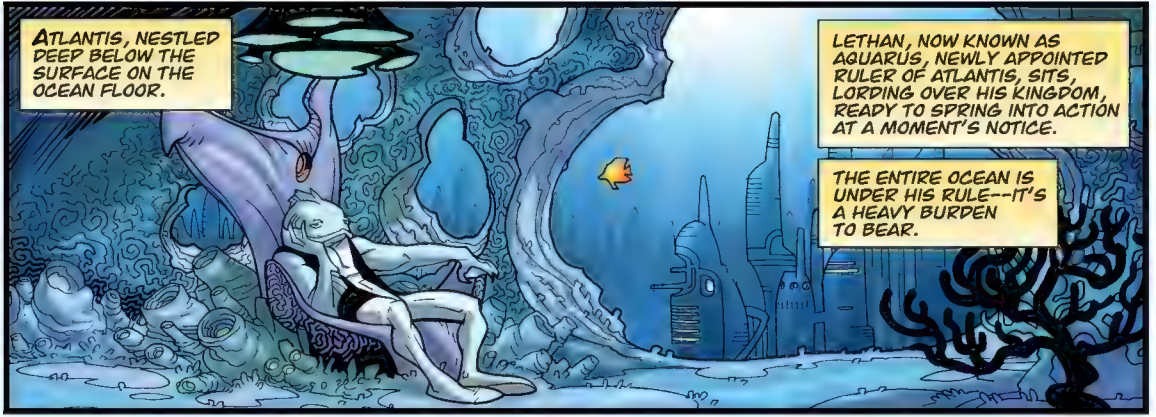
THANK
YOU!

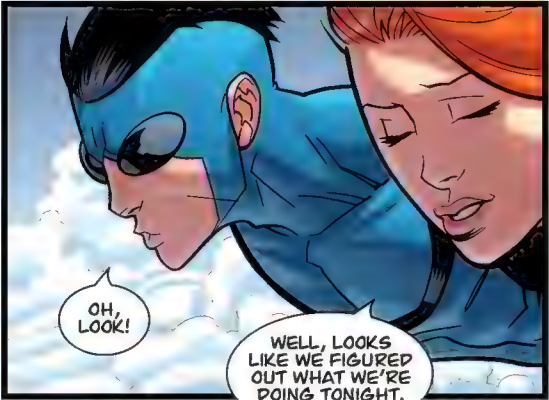
THANK
YOU!





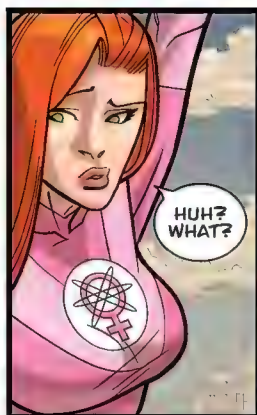








HEY--
WHAT THE
HECK WAS
THAT HE
SAID?



HUH?
WHAT?



HE SAID
HE SAW YOU
AT A PRISON
TODAY.

IS HE
CRAZY? DID
HE REALLY
SEE YOU?

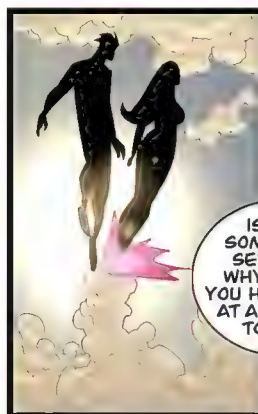


I DON'T
KNOW.
UM.

I DIDN'T
HEAR HIM
SAY THAT.



I KNOW WE
HAVEN'T BEEN
OFFICIALLY
TOGETHER FOR
VERY LONG--
BUT I CAN
TOTALLY TELL
WHEN YOU'RE
LYING.



IS THIS
SOMETHING
SERIOUS?
WHY WOULD
YOU HAVE BEEN
AT A PRISON
TODAY?



EVE?



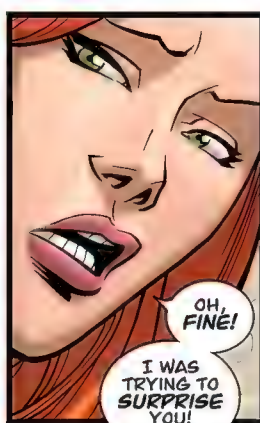
IT'S NOT
SOMETHING
SERIOUS.

CAN
WE DROP
IT?



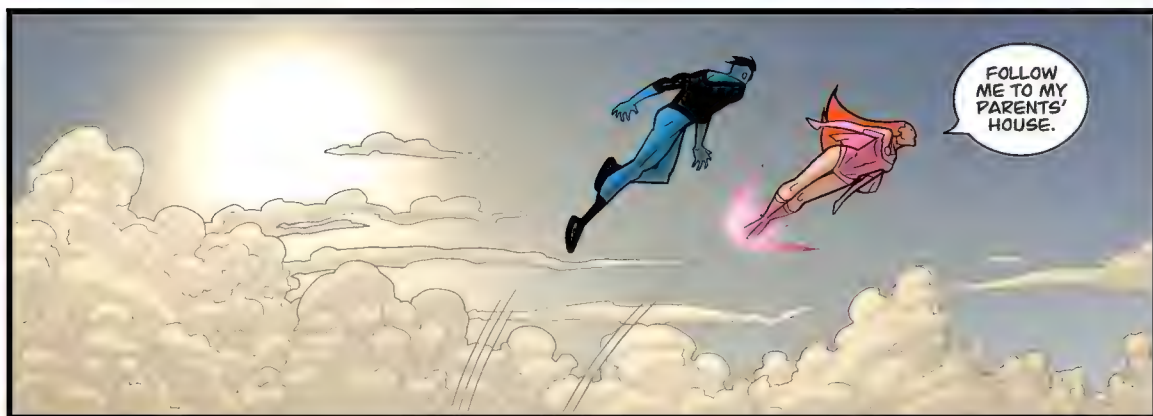
I DON'T
THINK SO.
NO.

DEFINITELY
NOT.



OH
FINE!

I WAS
TRYING TO
SURPRISE
YOU!

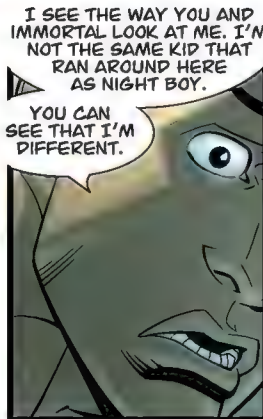
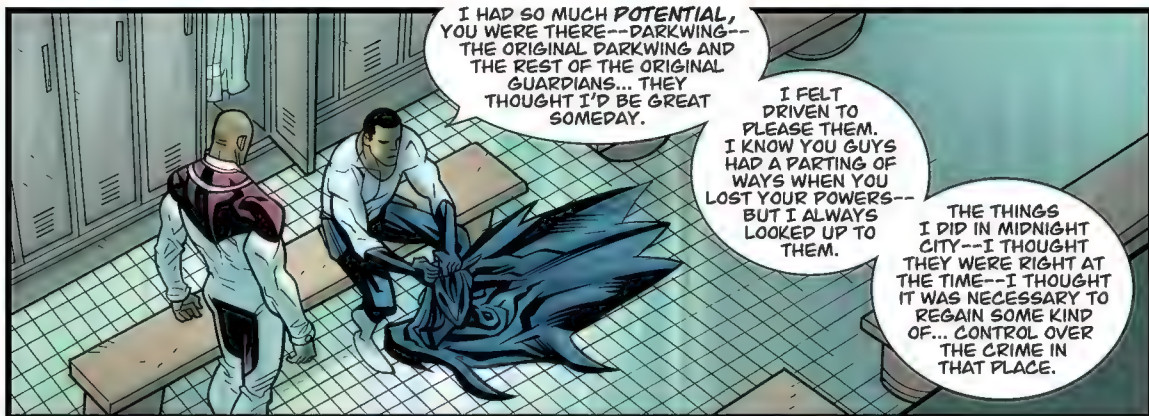


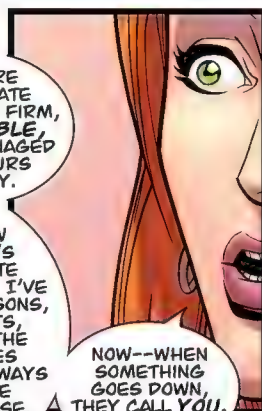
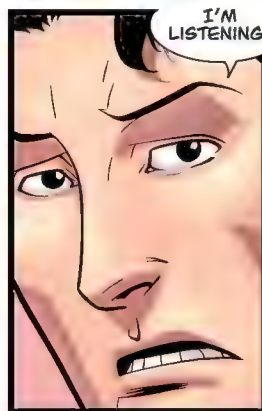
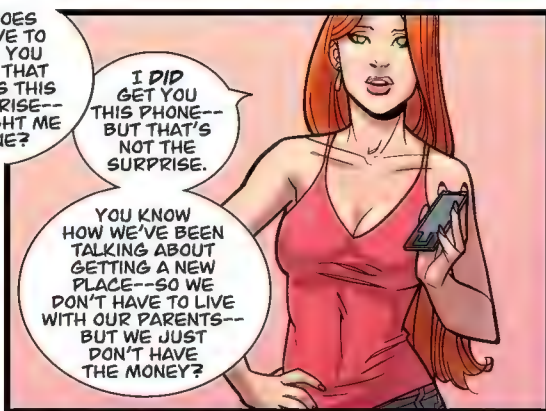
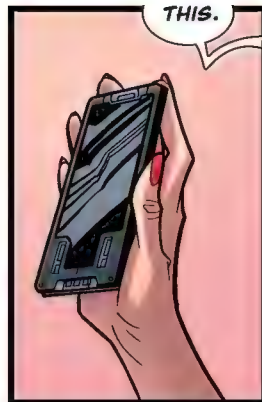
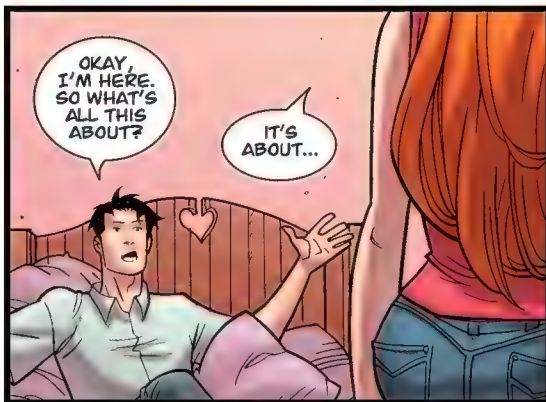
FOLLOW
ME TO MY
PARENTS'
HOUSE.

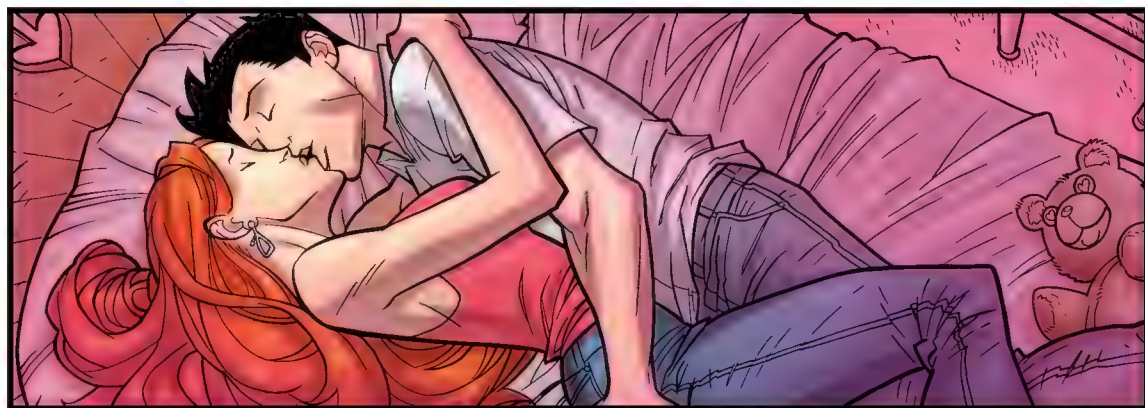
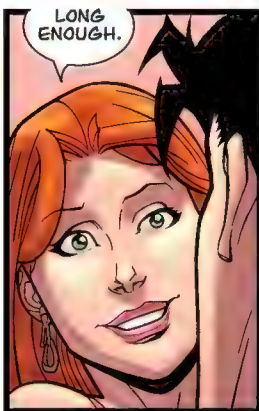
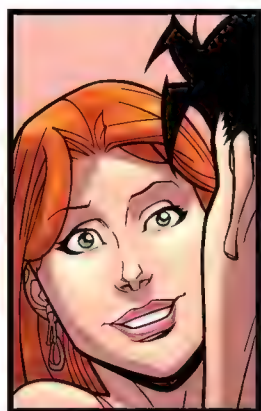
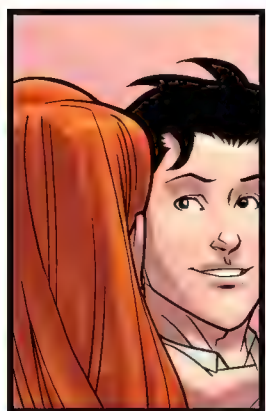
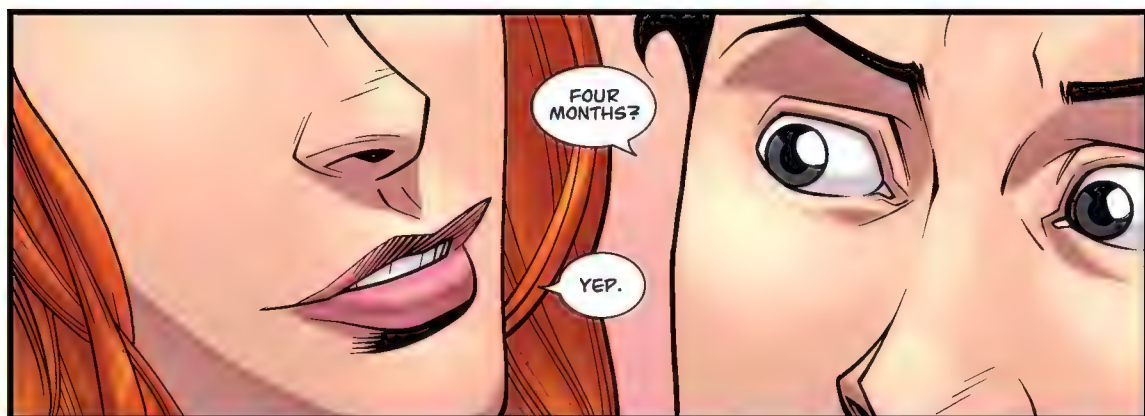
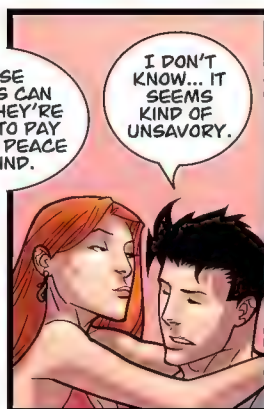
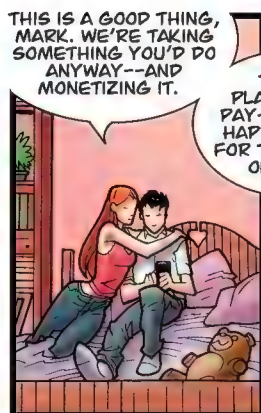


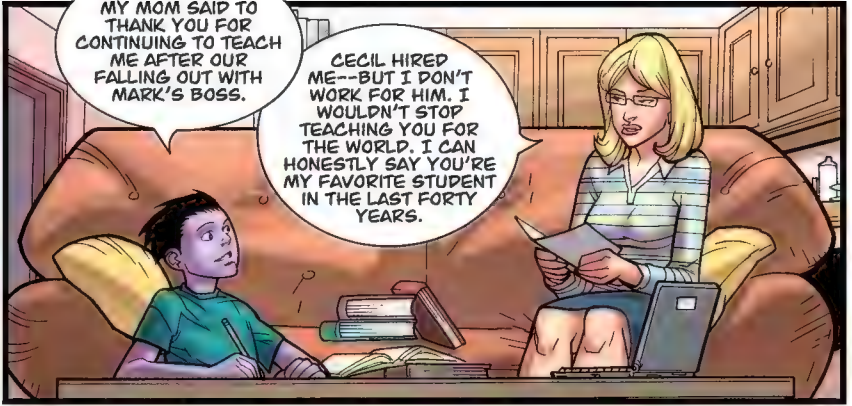
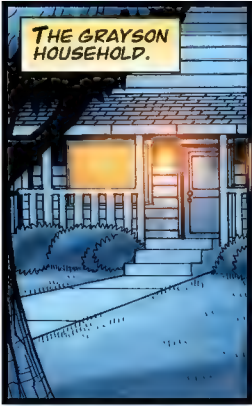
YOU UNDERSTAND?

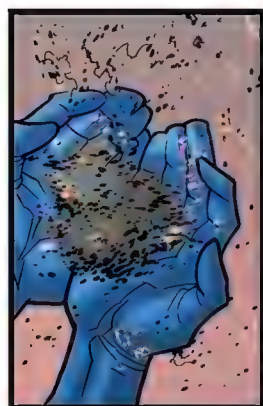
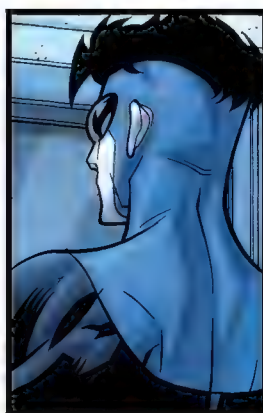
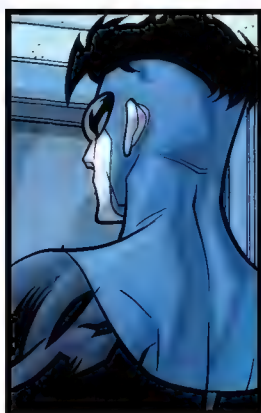
THAT WON'T BE A PROBLEM.

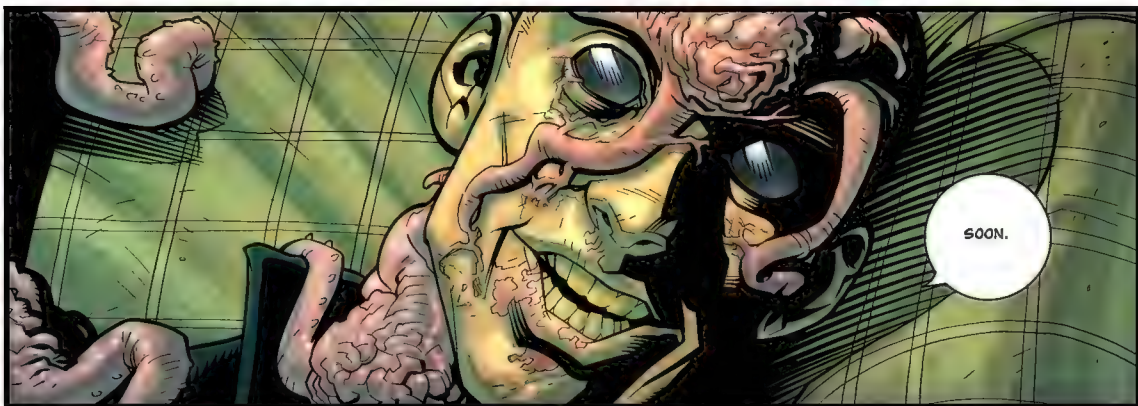
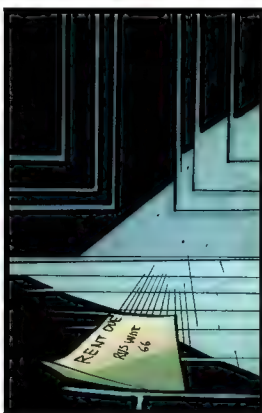


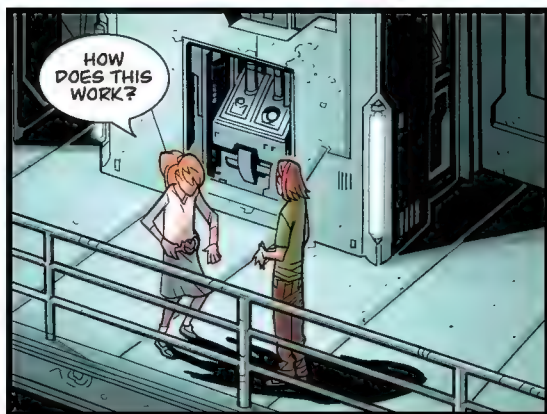












I'VE BEEN STUDYING YOUR CELLS FOR MANY MONTHS--SAMPLES TAKEN BEFORE YOUR TRANSFORMATION-- AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER.

I'VE FINALLY FOUND THE SOURCE OF YOUR "CURSE."

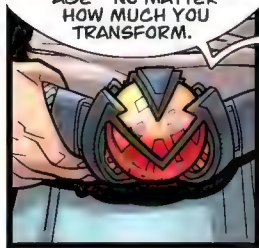
YOUR MONSTER FORM ROBS FROM YOUR CELLS-- ESSENTIALLY DESTROYING THEM IN THE TRANSFORMATION. WHEN YOU REVERT TO YOUR HUMAN FORM-- ITS ESSENTIALLY REBUILDING YOU-- CELL BY CELL.

AND IT'S DOING IT WRONG.

THAT'S WHY I'M GETTING YOUNGER? BECAUSE I'M BEING REBUILT INCORRECTLY?

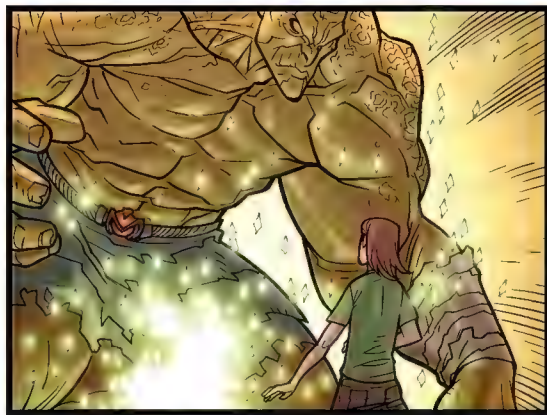
EXACTLY. IT PUTS YOU BACK TOGETHER BUT NOT ALL OF YOUR CELLS SURVIVE THE TRANSFORMATION-- IT REVERSES GROWTH.

THAT BELT WILL TAKE AN EXACT COPY OF YOUR CELL STRUCTURE A FRACTION OF A SECOND BEFORE YOUR TRANSFORMATION--IT WILL STORE IT, AND IT WILL ASSIST IN YOUR RESTRUCTURING-- MAINTAINING YOUR AGE--NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU TRANSFORM.



TRY IT OUT.

HERE GOES....

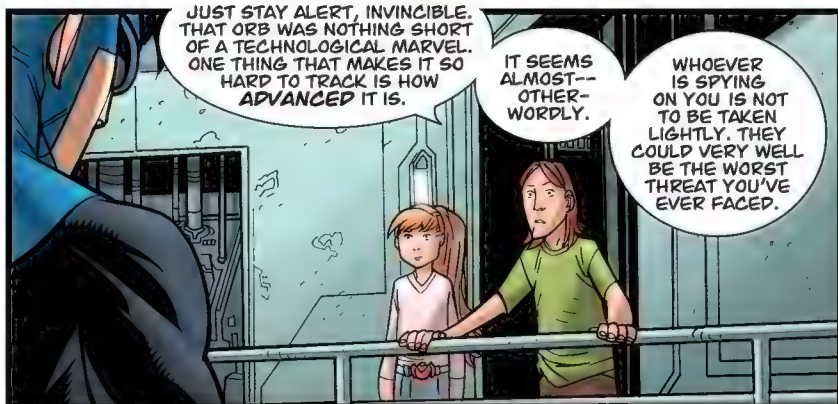
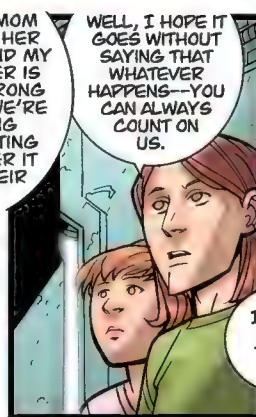
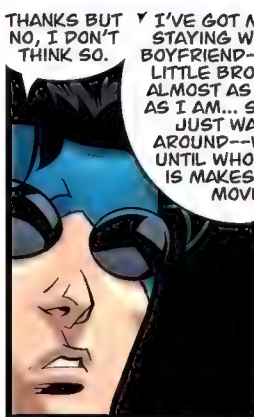


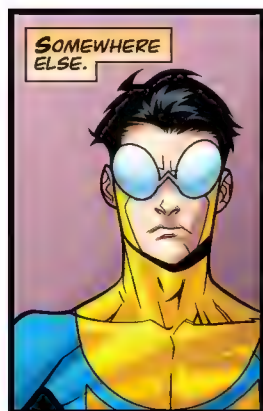
IT'S DESIGNED TO RESIST YOUR TRANSFORMATION-- IT WON'T CHANGE WITH YOUR CLOTHING.

NOW, REVERT BACK.

UNGH... FEELS WEIRD.









IT'S A
START.



CHAPTER 59



RYAN



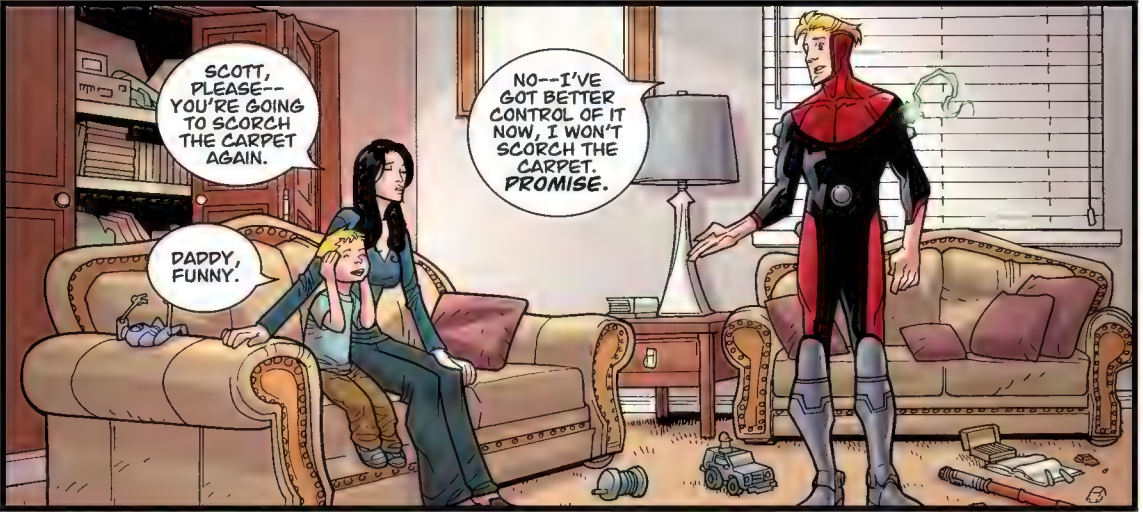
INVINCIBLE!!

YOU THINK
YOU ARE ABOVE
THE LAW--YOU
THINK YOUR
ACTIONS HOLD NO
CONSEQUENCE!

**YOU ARE
WRONG!**

YOU
WILL PAY
FOR YOUR
CRIMES
AGAINST
HUMANITY!

**POWERPLEX
WILL MAKE
YOU PAY!!**



SCOTT,
PLEASE--
YOU'RE GOING
TO SCORCH
THE CARPET
AGAIN.

NO--I'VE
GOT BETTER
CONTROL OF IT
NOW, I WON'T
SCORCH THE
CARPET.
PROMISE.

DADDY,
FUNNY.

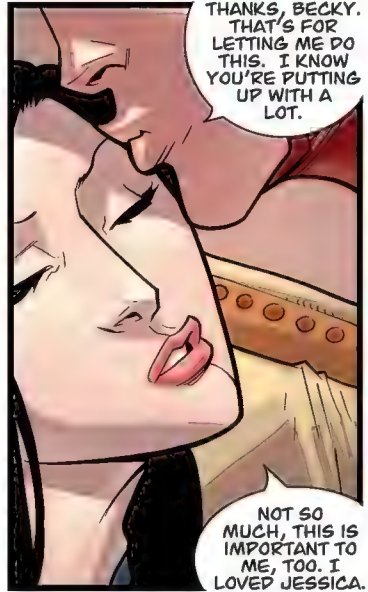
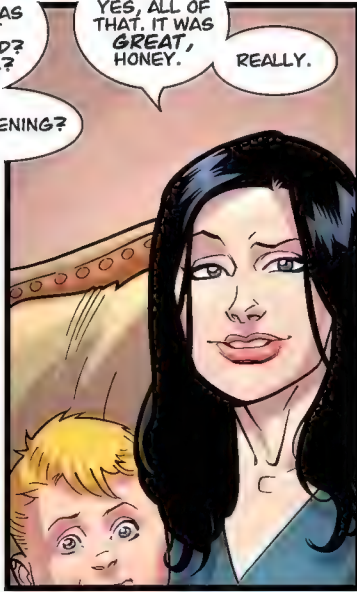


BUT HOW WAS
IT? DID IT
SOUND GOOD?
POWERFUL?

YES, ALL OF
THAT. IT WAS
GREAT,
HONEY.

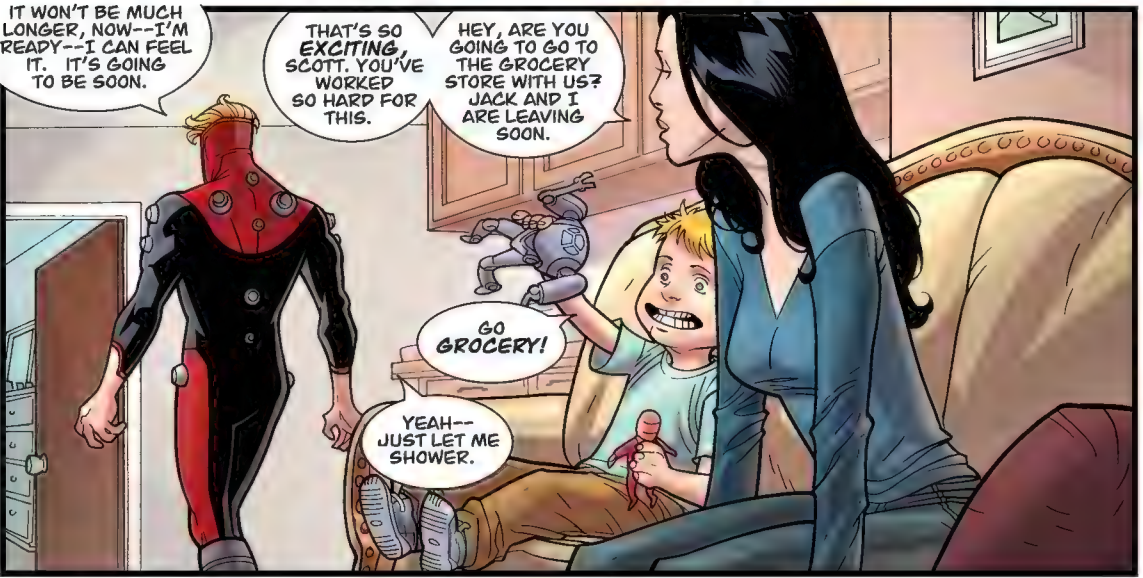
REALLY.

THREATENING?



THANKS, BECKY.
THAT'S FOR
LETTING ME DO
THIS. I KNOW
YOU'RE PUTTING
UP WITH A
LOT.

NOT SO
MUCH, THIS IS
IMPORTANT TO
ME, TOO. I
LOVED JESSICA.



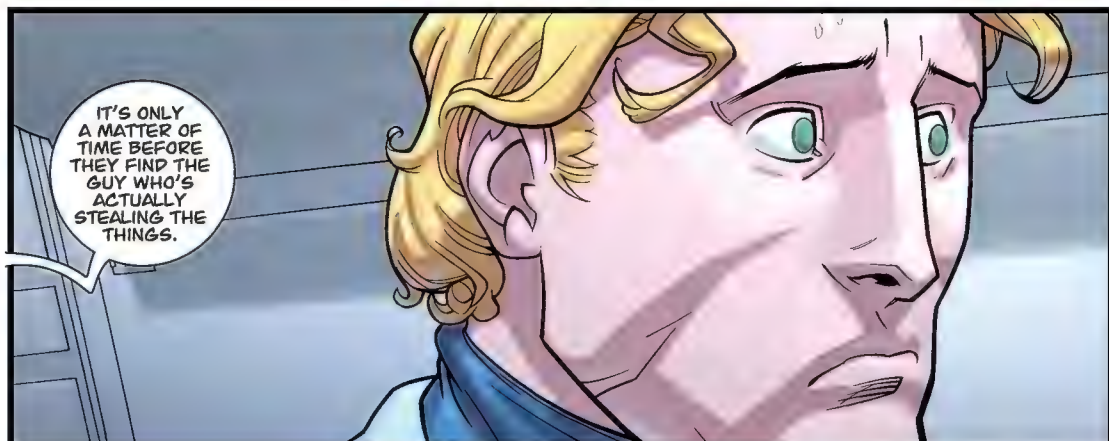
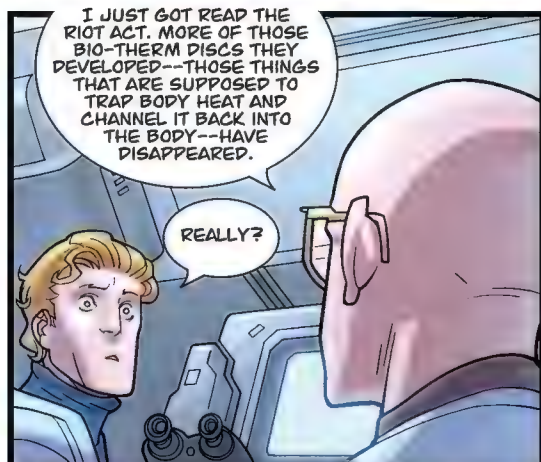
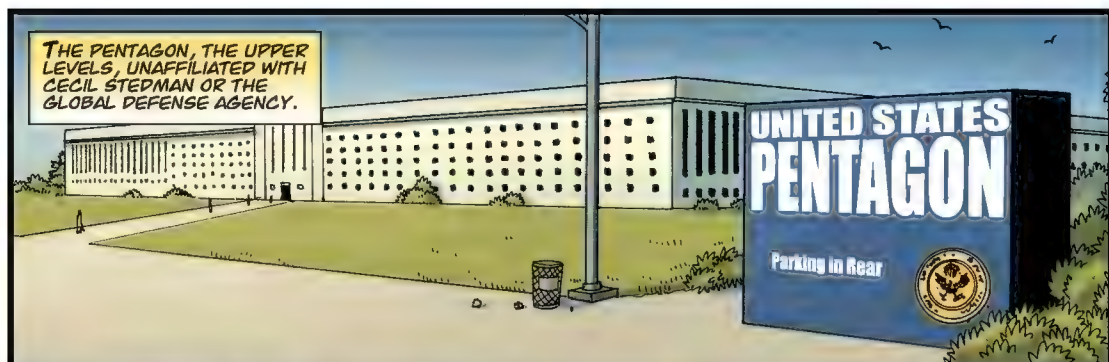
IT WON'T BE MUCH
LONGER, NOW--I'M
READY--I CAN FEEL
IT. IT'S GOING
TO BE SOON.

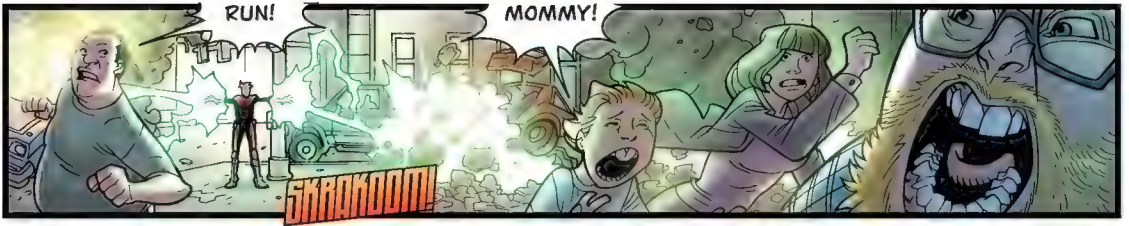
THAT'S SO
EXCITING,
SCOTT. YOU'VE
WORKED
SO HARD FOR
THIS.

HEY, ARE YOU
GOING TO GO TO
THE GROCERY
STORE WITH US?
JACK AND I
ARE LEAVING
SOON.

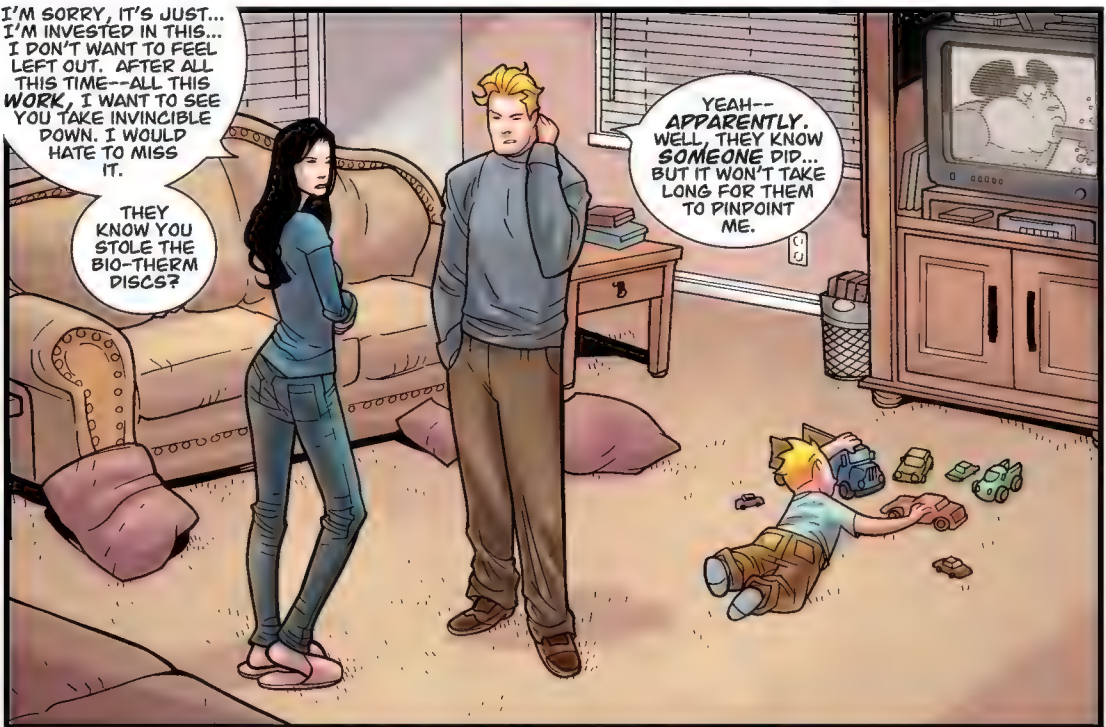
GO
GROCERY!

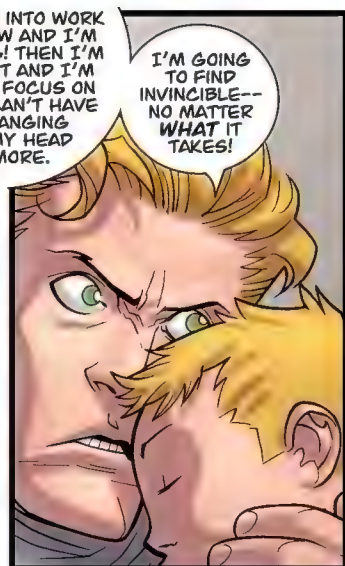
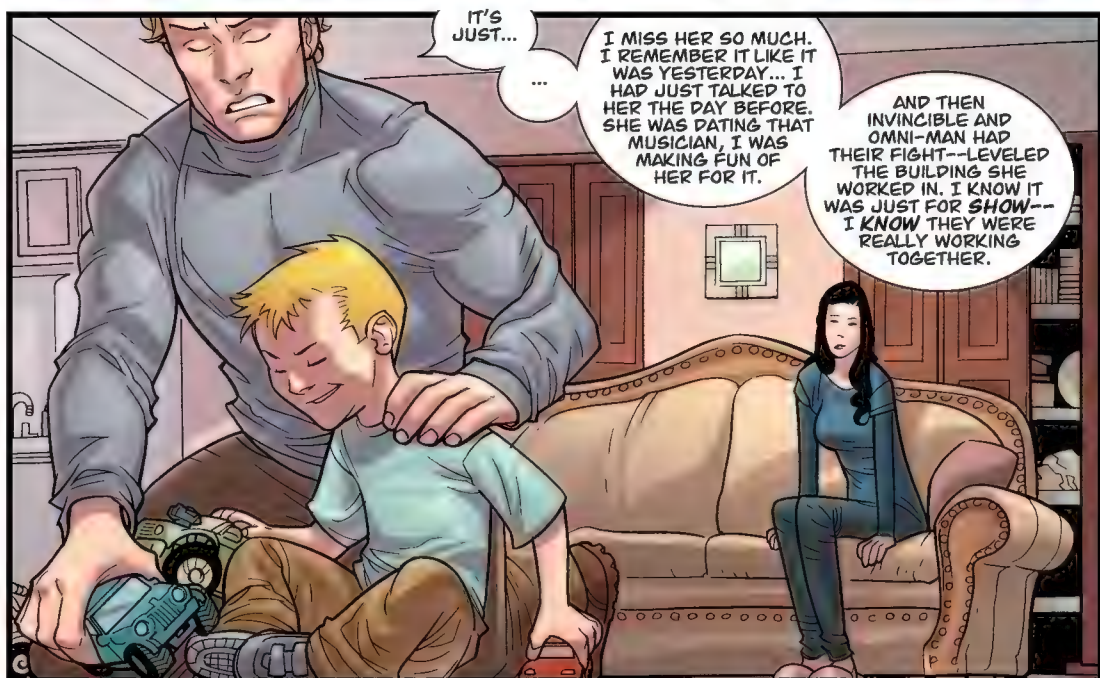
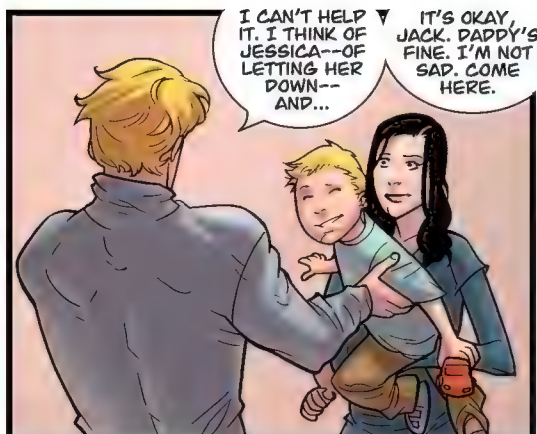
YEAH--
JUST LET ME
SHOWER.



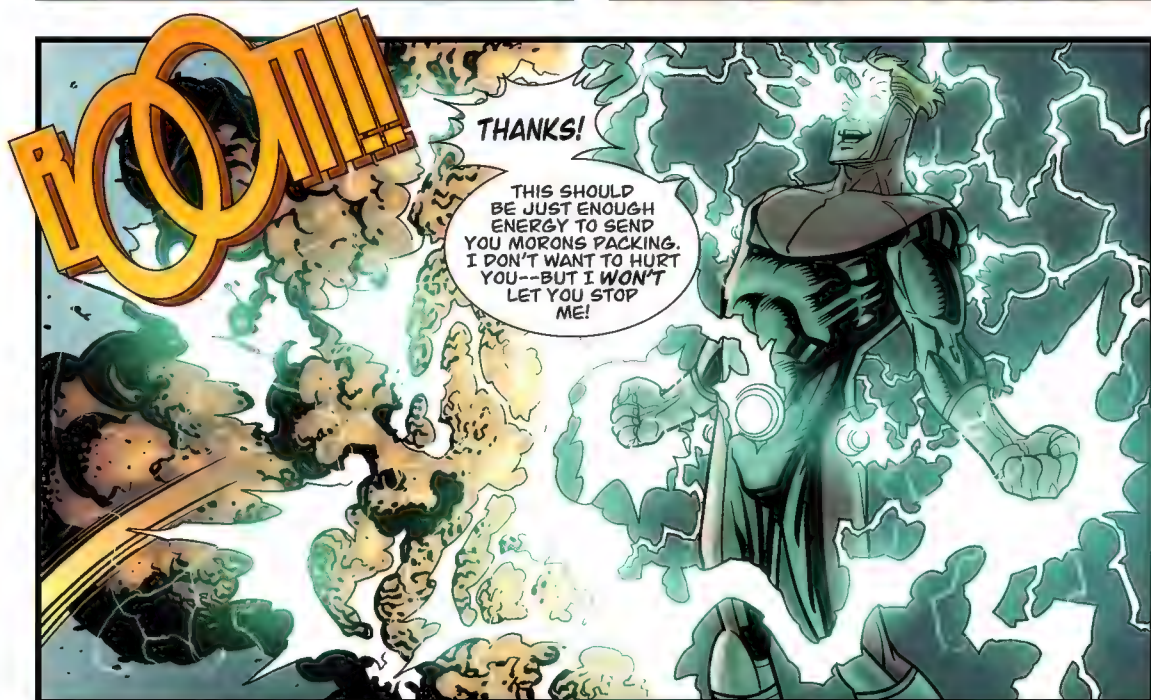
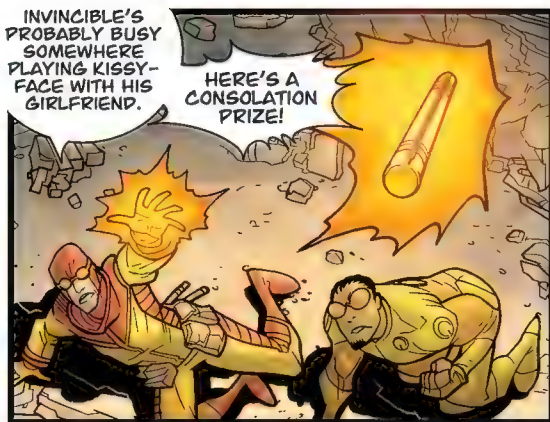


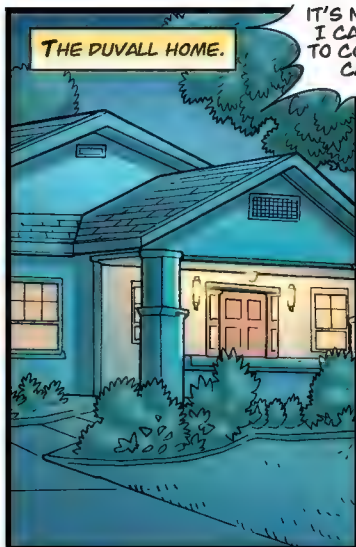




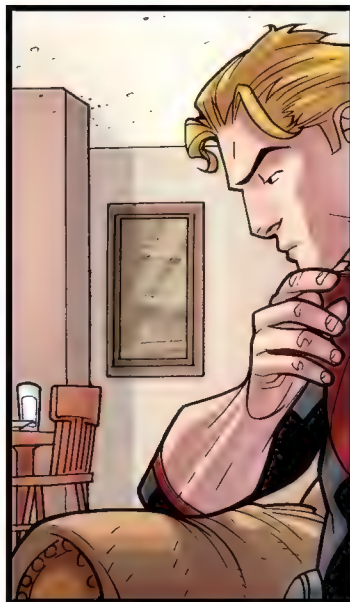
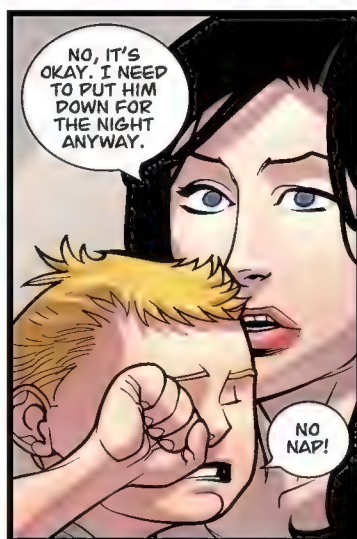


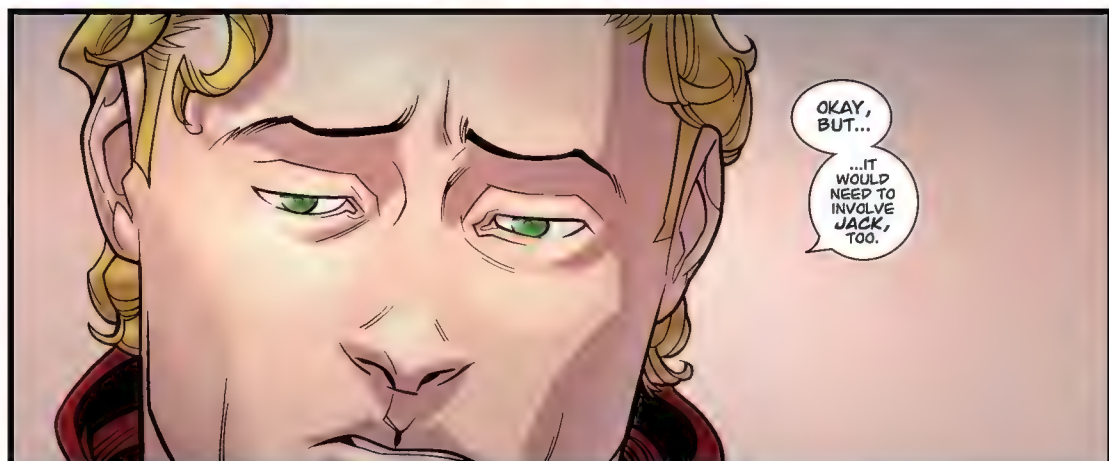






IT'S NOT WORKING!
I CAN'T GET HIM
TO COME TO ME! I
CAN'T FIND
HIM!







ARE YOU OKAY?
COMFORTABLE?

WE'RE FINE.
DON'T WORRY
ABOUT US.
WHAT IS THIS
PLACE?

GOVERNMENT OWNED
WEAPONS TESTING FACILITY--
DECOMMISSIONED. THEY
PROBABLY DON'T KNOW
THEY STILL HAVE IT.

THE NEWS HAS
BEEN RUNNING THE
FOOTAGE FOR A FEW
MINUTES NOW. HE
COULD BE HERE ANY
MINUTE. SAYS I'M
GOING TO KILL YOU IF
HE DOESN'T COME
ALONE--SO HE
SHOULDN'T BRING
ANYONE.

I HOPE
THIS WOR--



WHAT
THE HECK,
DUDE?!

PLEASE LET THIS
LADY AND HER KID
GO. YOU DON'T HAVE
TO DO THIS. I DON'T
EVEN KNOW WHO
YOU ARE!

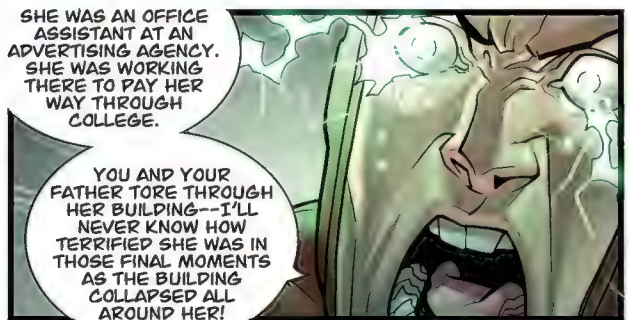


DO YOU
KNOW WHO
JESSICA
DUVALL
IS?



NO. I
DON'T.

AGAIN,
MAN--
WHAT THE
HECK?



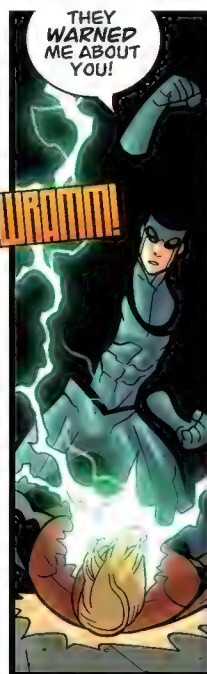
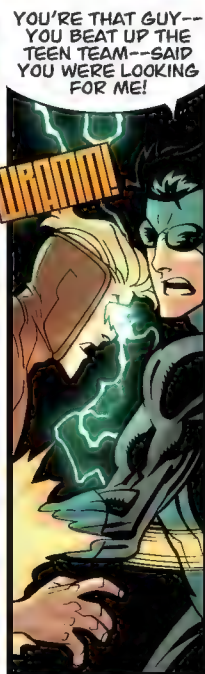
SHE WAS AN OFFICE
ASSISTANT AT AN
ADVERTISING AGENCY.
SHE WAS WORKING
THERE TO PAY HER
WAY THROUGH
COLLEGE.

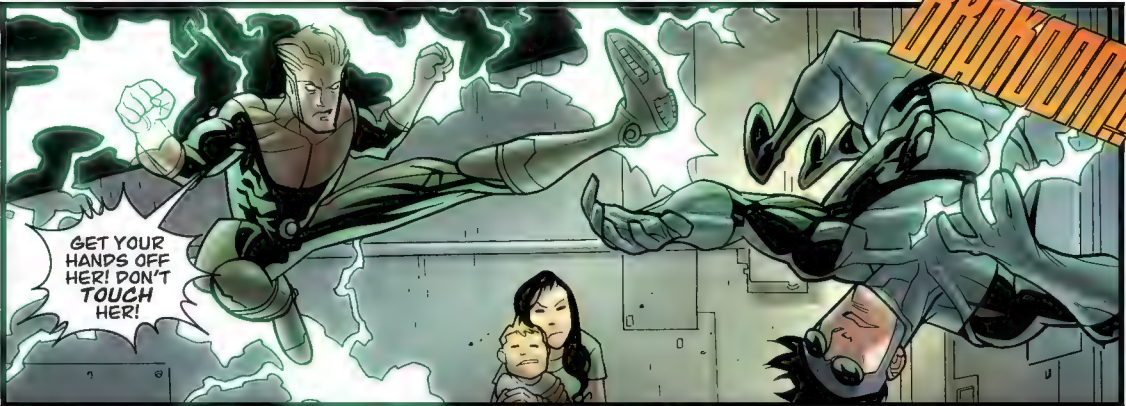
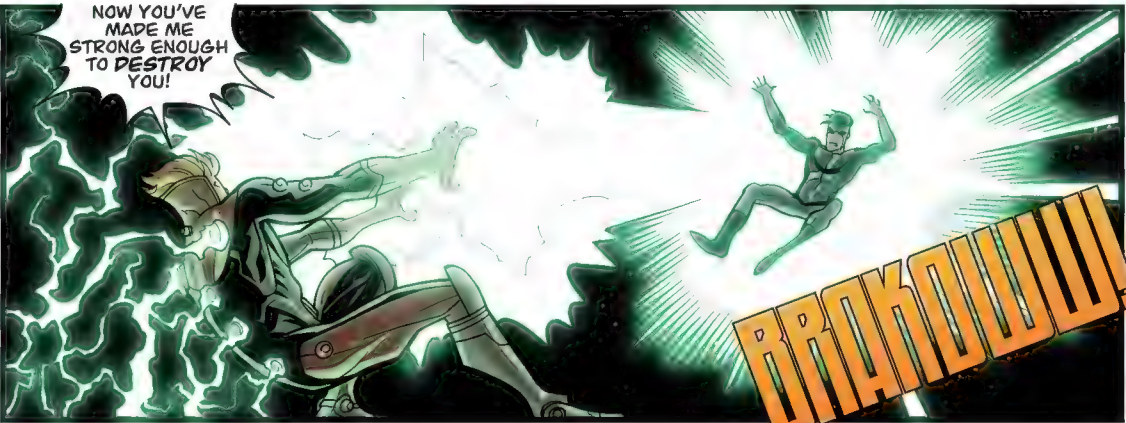
YOU AND YOUR
FATHER TORE THROUGH
HER BUILDING--I'LL
NEVER KNOW HOW
TERRIFIED SHE WAS IN
THOSE FINAL MOMENTS
AS THE BUILDING
COLLAPSED ALL
AROUND HER!



A LOT...
A LOT OF
PEOPLE DIED IN
THAT FIGHT. I
DON'T KNOW
THE NAME OF
EVERY ONE...

I'M
SORRY,
ALL I CAN
SAY IS I'M
SORRY.

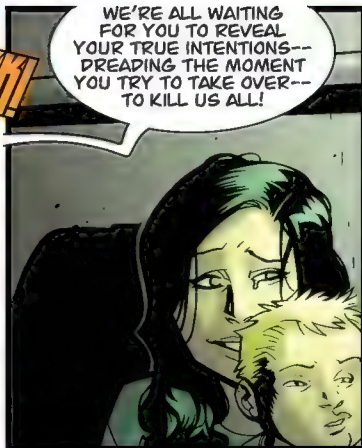




THE PEOPLE FEAR
YOU, Y'KNOW? IT
MIGHT NOT BE
OBVIOUS--BUT
YOU SCARE
EVERYONE!



WE'RE ALL WAITING
FOR YOU TO REVEAL
YOUR TRUE INTENTIONS--
DREADING THE MOMENT
YOU TRY TO TAKE OVER--
TO KILL US ALL!



BUT THEY WON'T HAVE
TO WORRY ABOUT
THAT, I'LL PROTECT
THEM FROM YOU.
I'LL MAKE SURE YOU
NEVER HURT
ANYONE EVER
AGAIN.

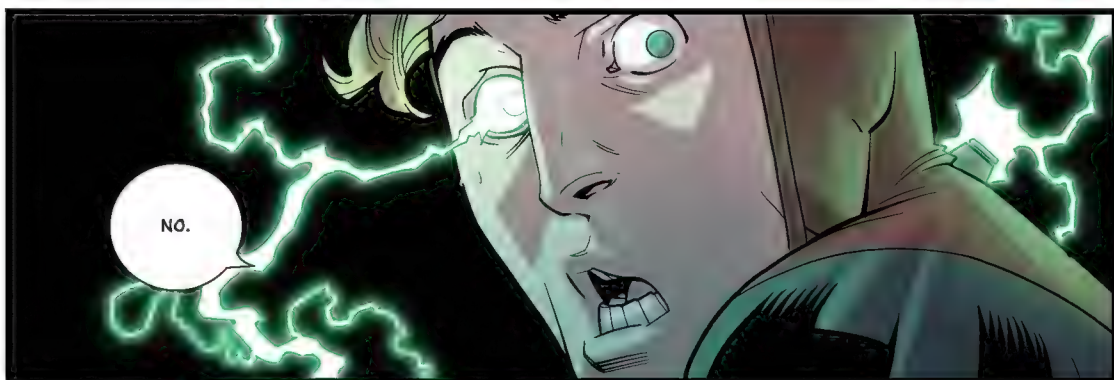
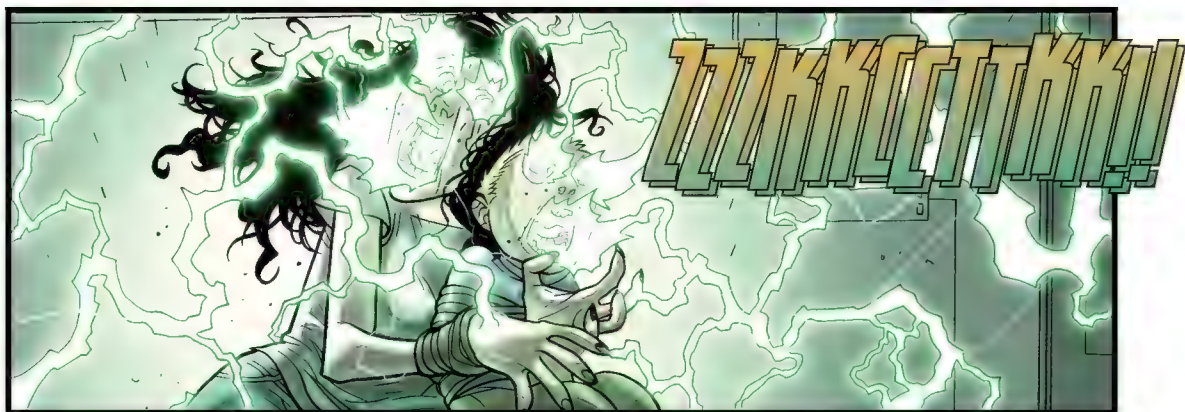


DIE
INVINCIBLE!

FOR
EVERYTHING
YOU'VE DONE!
FOR ALL THE
PAIN YOU'VE
CAUSED!

DIE!

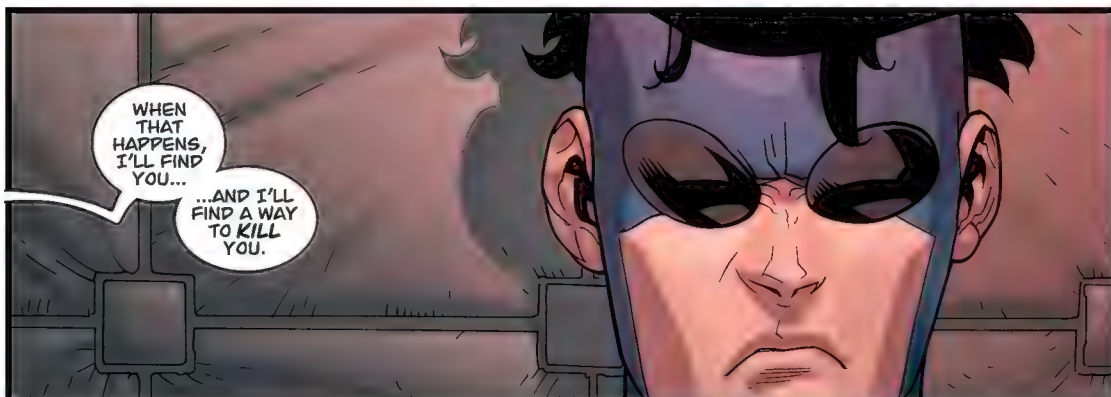
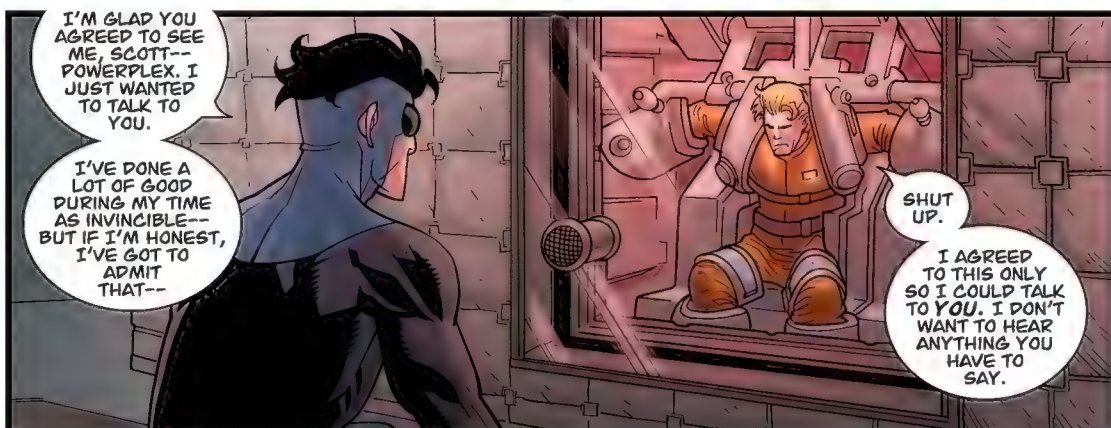














CHAPTER 60



MONTHS AGO.

OH,
GOD.

OH,
GOD.

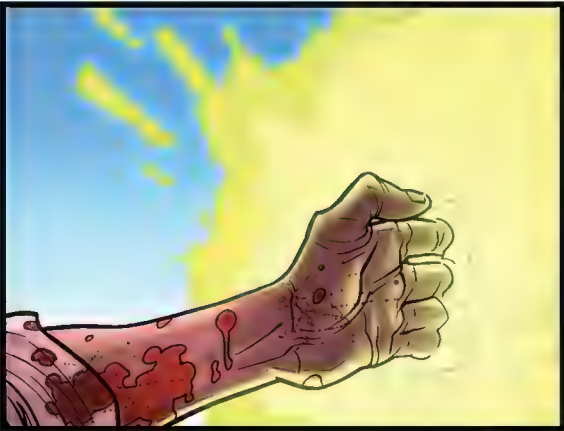
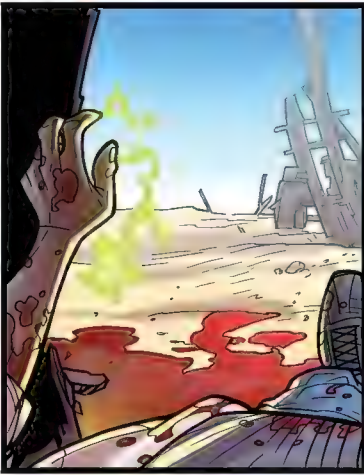
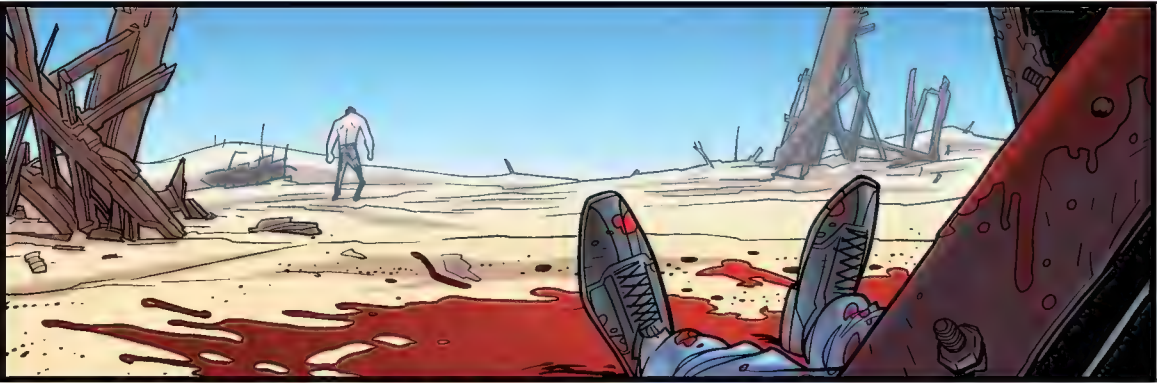
OH,
GOD.

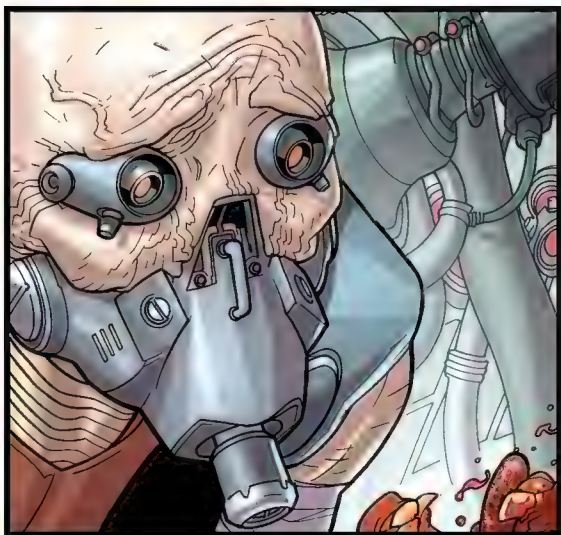
OH,
GOD.

OH,
GOD.

OH,
GOD.





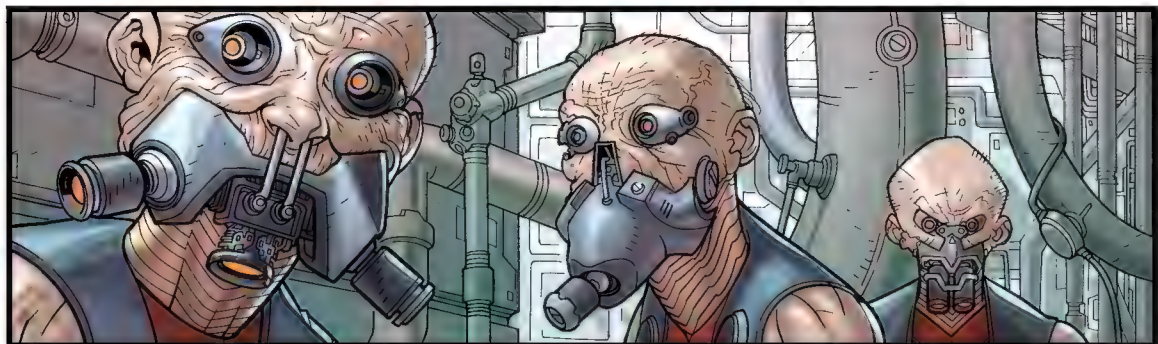


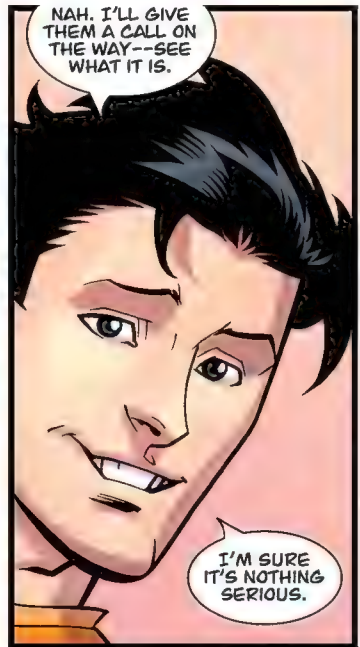
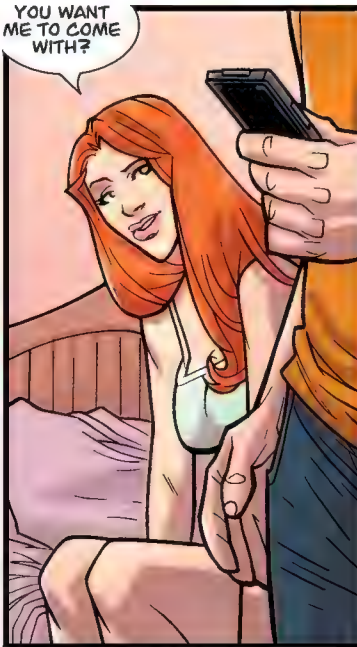
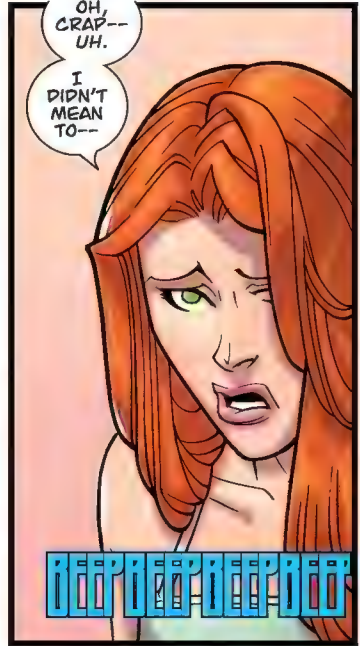
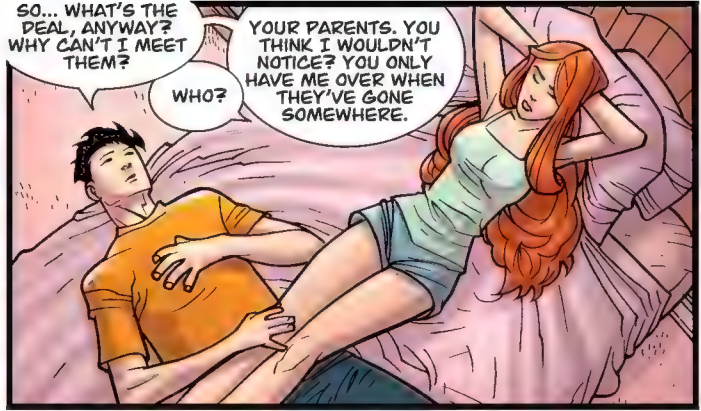
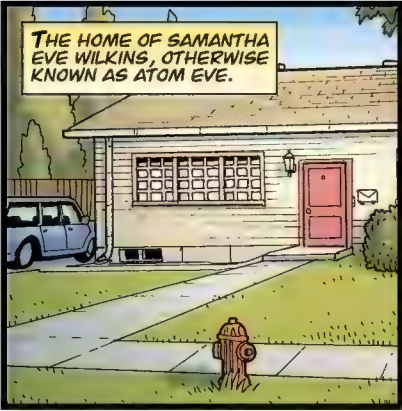
MONTHS LATER.



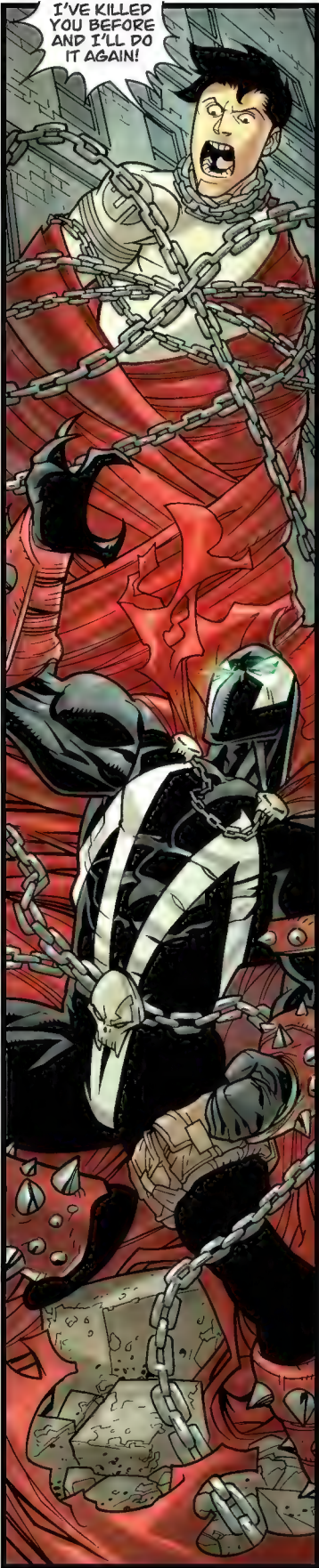
Now.

DAY ONE.









STOP THIS! WE'RE TOO
EVENLY MATCHED--
JUST STOP! THIS COULD
GO ON FOREVER!

STOP FIGHTING
AND TELL ME HOW
YOU GOT HERE--
WHO BROUGHT YOU
HERE?! HOW DID
YOU GET TO THIS
DIMENSION?!

KROOM!

YOU'LL GET NO ANSWERS
FROM ME! I WILL NEVER
YIELD TO YOU. IT SICKENS
ME TO EVEN LOOK
AT YOU.

A LESSER VERSION OF ME--
A PALE REFLECTION. I'LL SEE
YOUR BRAINS SMEARED
ACROSS MY KNUCKLES
BEFORE I BOW
BEFORE YOU.

I'LL--

WROKK!

**SHUT
UP!**

KROOM!

WHAT
THE HELL
IS--

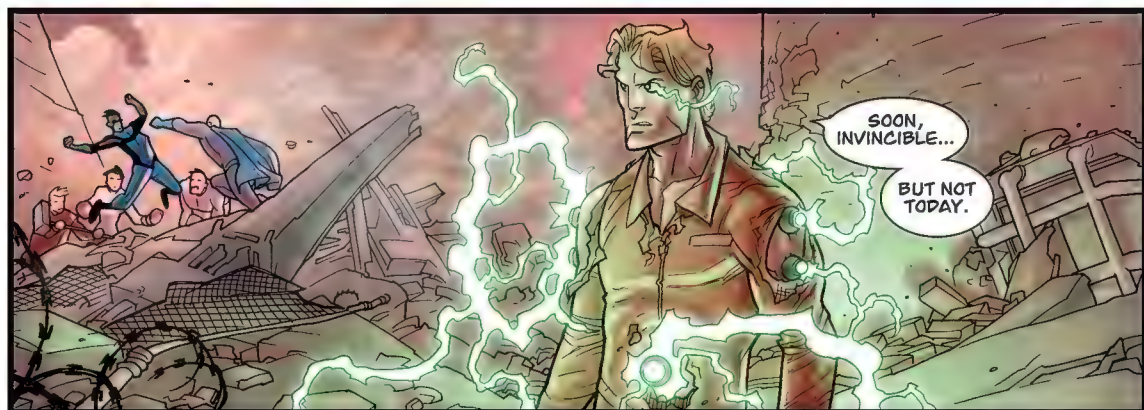
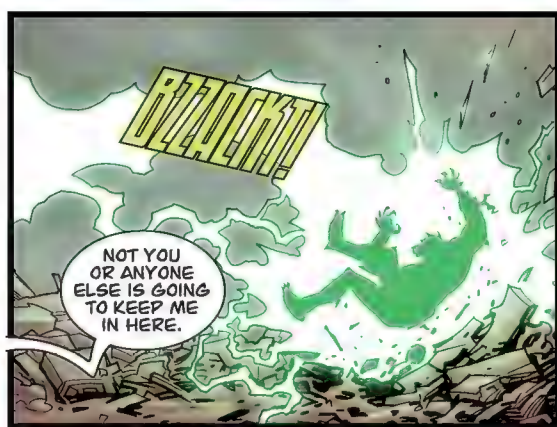
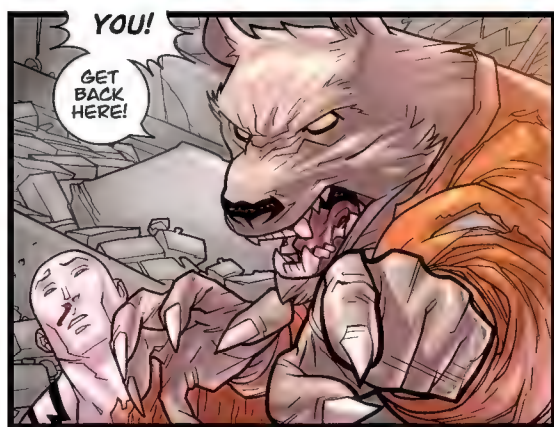
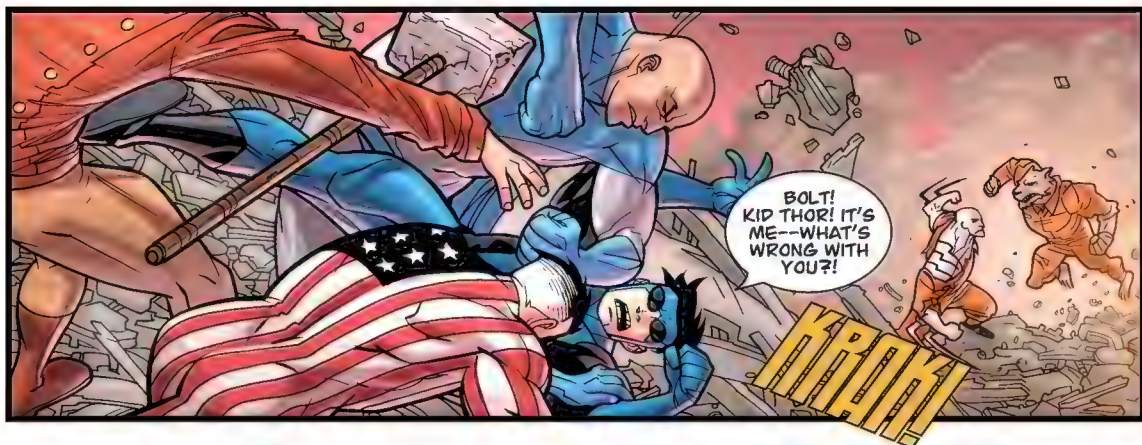
HEY!

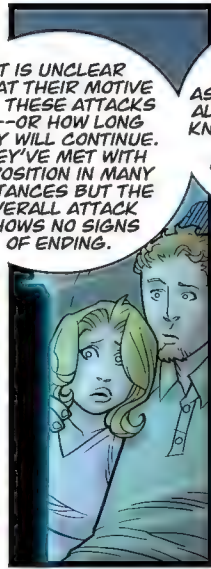
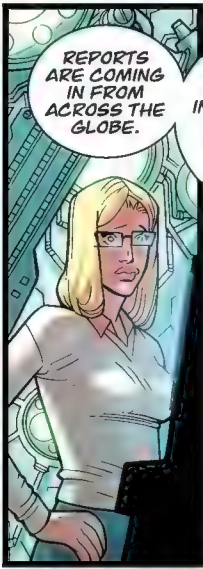
THERE'S ANOTHER
ONE--**GET HIM!** WE'VE
GOT TO STOP THESE
BASTARDS BEFORE
IT'S TOO LATE!

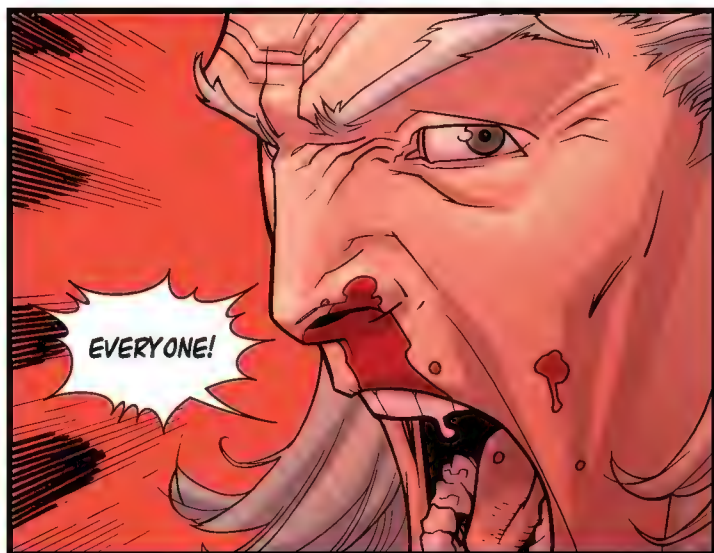
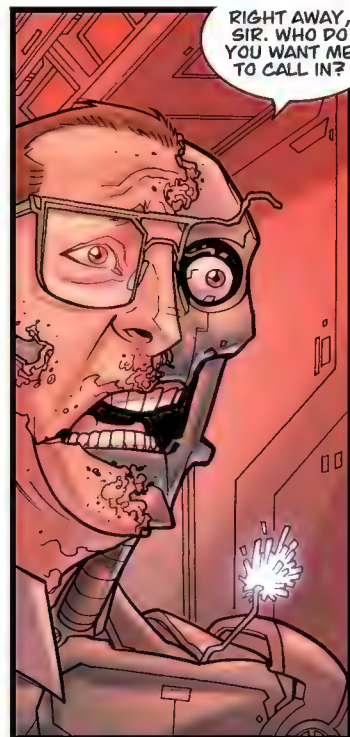
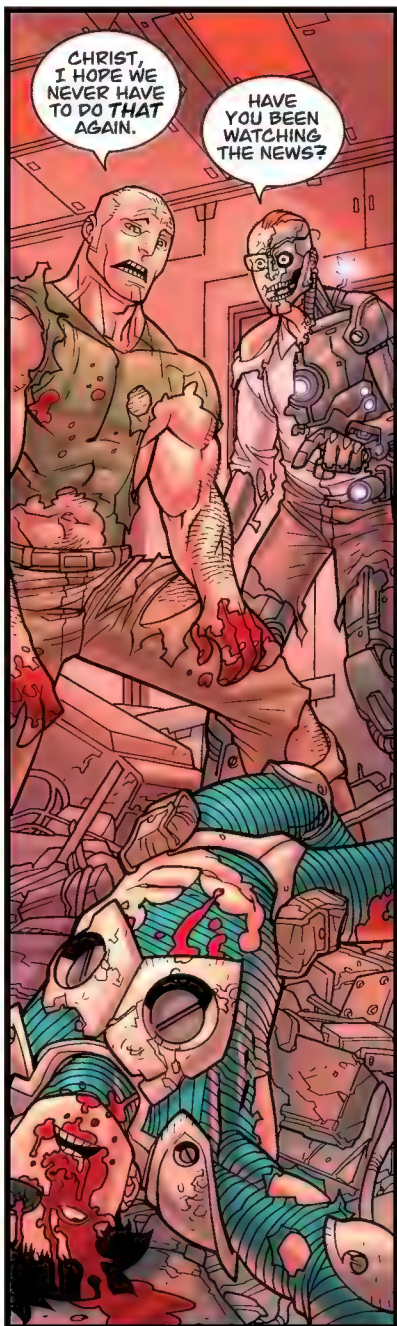
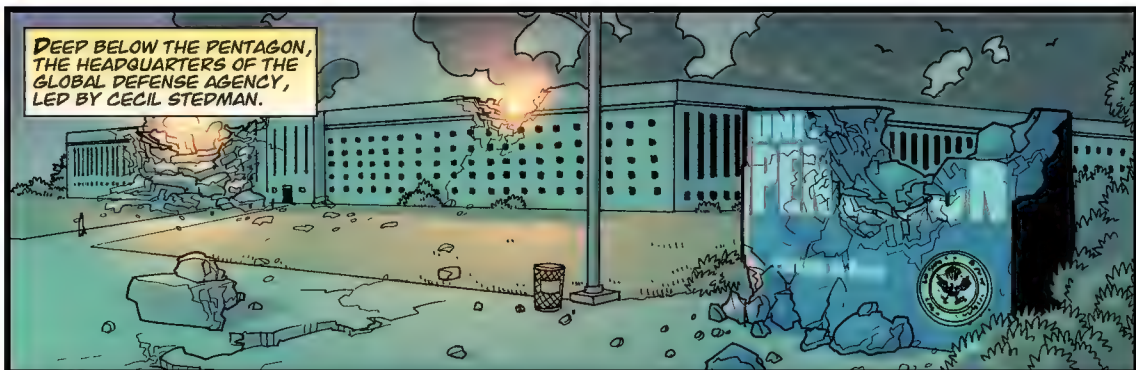
WHAT?!

GUYS--
IT'S ME!

IT'S--!







DAY TWO.

SPREAD OUT AND ENTER THE TRANSPORT WINDOWS, DOUBLE TIME! BE READY FOR WHATEVER FACES YOU WHEN YOU EMERGE, DROP POINTS ARE BEING CHOSEN AT RANDOM-- WE'VE GOT NO TIME FOR SPECIFIC MATCH-UPS.

WE'VE GOT MULTIPLE THREATS, MULTIPLE LOCATIONS-- THIS SITUATION IS DIRE, I WANT CONTINUAL UPDATES ON THE COMLINKS, IF YOU'RE DOWN WE NEED TO KNOW IMMEDIATELY SO REPLACEMENTS CAN BE DISPATCHED.

LET'S SAVE THE WORLD, PEOPLE!

EVERYONE LISTEN UP, THIS IS AGENT CECIL STEPMAN. MOST OF YOU HAVE NO CLUE WHO I AM SO JUST ASSUME I'M YOUR BOSS' BOSS BECAUSE IN MOST CASES THAT'S TRUE. I'LL BE COORDINATING THINGS FROM HERE.

IF YOU'RE INJURED, REPORT IN IMMEDIATELY. I'LL HAVE MISS POPPER ON STAND-BY TO RETRIEVE ANYONE NOT FIT FOR COMBAT.

POPPER, YOU UP FOR THIS?

I'VE BEEN DRINKING ORANGE JUICE ALL MORNING.

THIS WON'T BE ENOUGH! NOT NEARLY ENOUGH! CYBLADE, RIPCLAW, HEATWAVE, VELOCITY, BALLISTIC--IT'S AMUSING TO SEE YOU ALL WORKING TOGETHER AGAIN-- CYBERFORCE, WAS IT?

IT DOESN'T MATTER, I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU AND YOU CAN'T HOPE TO WIN THIS FIGHT!

THIS IS YOUR FINAL BATTLE-- ENJOY IT WHILE IT LASTS!

THEY'RE JUST UP AHEAD, WON'T BE LONG NOW.

SORRY I'M PULLING YOU SO FAST.

IT'S OKAY, WE'VE GOTTA BE AS FAST AS POSSIBLE. ARE YOU OKAY?

NO. I'M NOT.

THEY'RE ALL ME. I'M NOT DOING THIS--BUT I CAN'T HELP BUT--I LOOKED IN HIS EYES AND I SAW MYSELF. I FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF THIS.

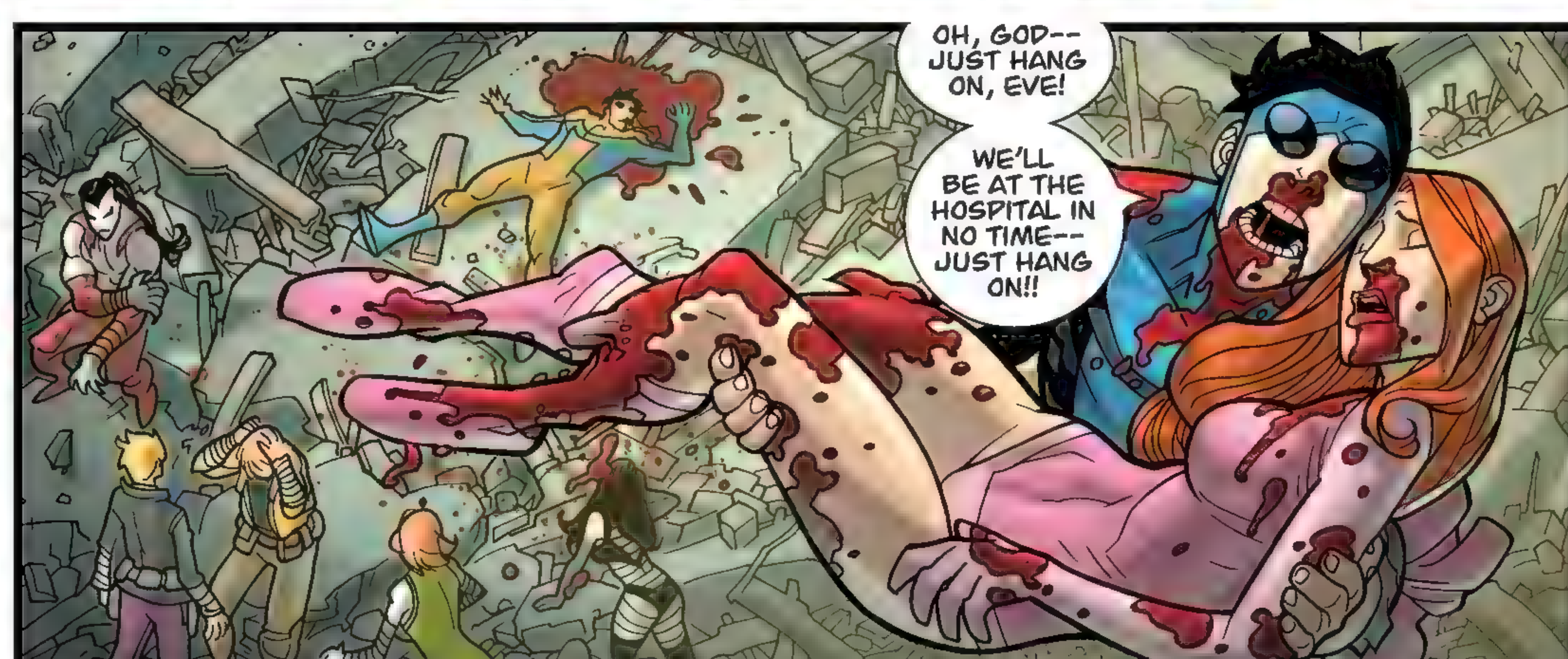
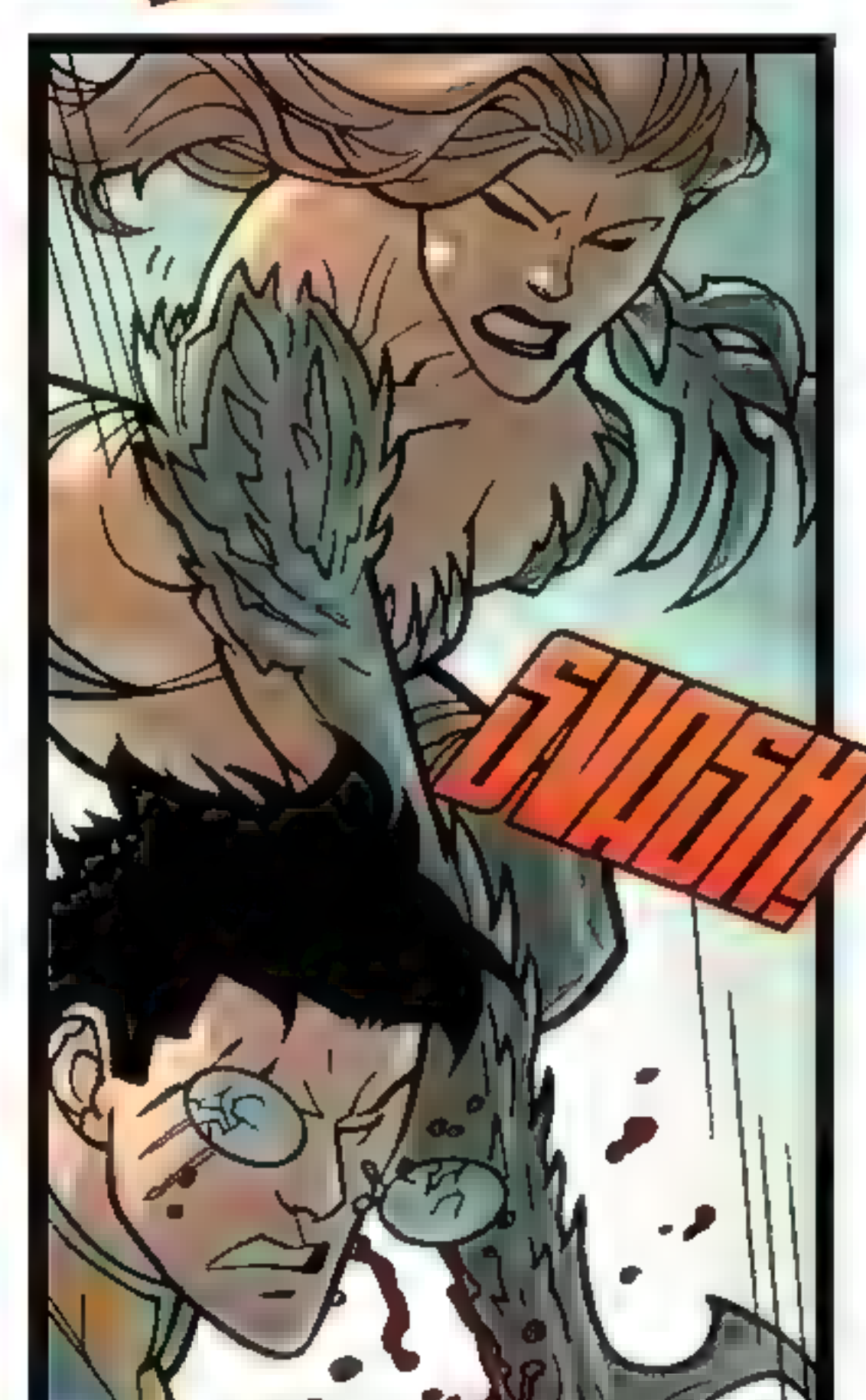
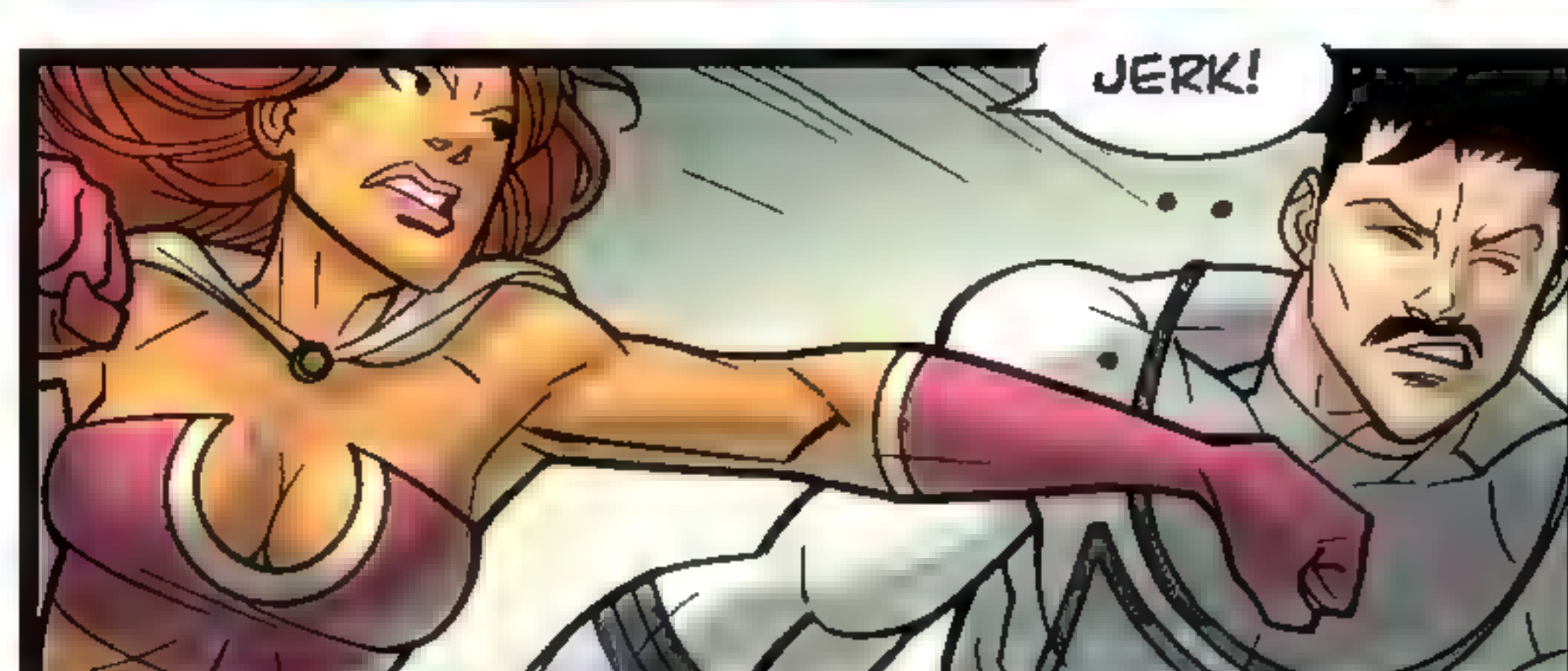
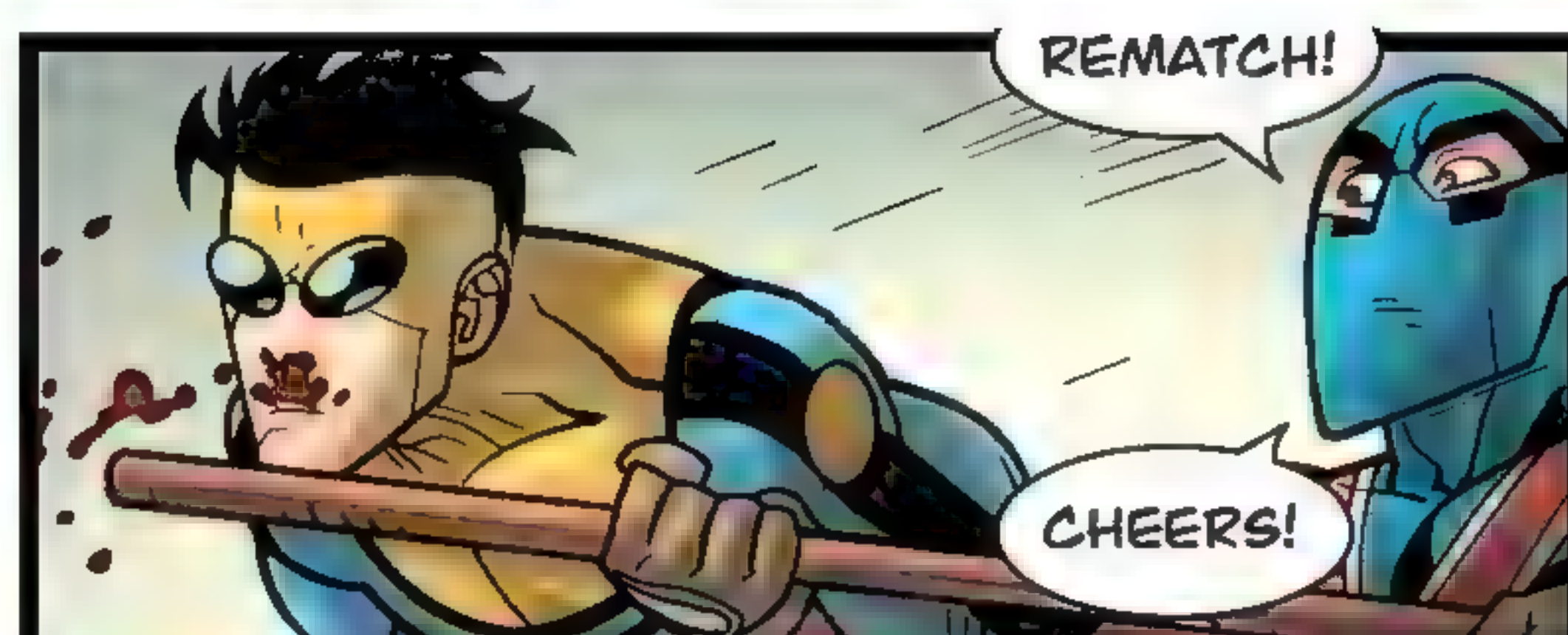
BEYOND THAT--IT'S OTHER VERSIONS OF ME, FROM OTHER DIMENSIONS...

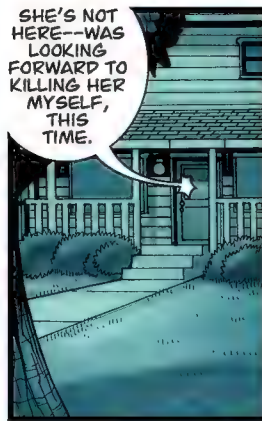
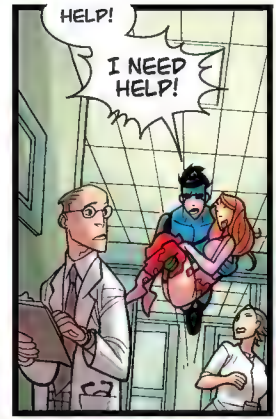
I ONLY KNOW OF ONE MAN WHO HAS THE POWER TO ACCESS OTHER DIMENSIONS AND HATES ME ENOUGH TO DO THIS.

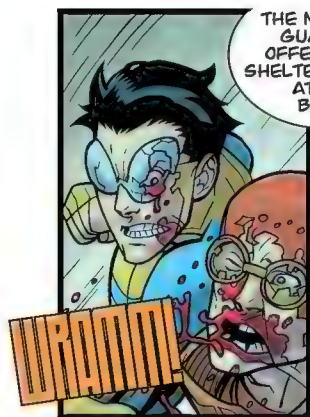
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...

RIGHT?

OKAY, GUYS--CAN WE PLEASE SHUT HIM UP?







THE NATIONAL GUARD IS OFFERING TO SHELTER PEOPLE AT THE BASE.

NO--WE'LL BE FINE HERE. I DON'T WANT TO BE LOCKED AWAY AS LONG AS THEY'RE STILL BROADCASTING UPDATES.



WAKE UP, AMANDA-- PLEASE BE OKAY--

MONSTER GIRL!



WHERE'S DARKWING?

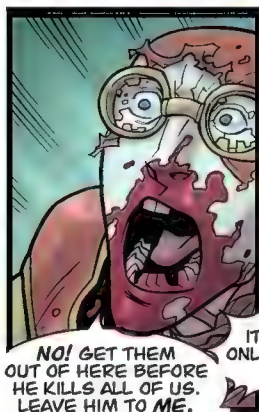
HE'S NOT HERE--THAT MADMAN MUST HAVE KILLED HIM, TRAPPING HIMSELF IN THE SHADOWVERSE... HE SAVED US.

DARKWING SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE US.



JUST FIX HER! PLEASE!

FIX HER!



NO! GET THEM OUT OF HERE BEFORE HE KILLS ALL OF US. LEAVE HIM TO ME.

IT'S THE ONLY WAY-- GO!



NO! GO BACK!

WE CAN'T LEAVE HIM!!

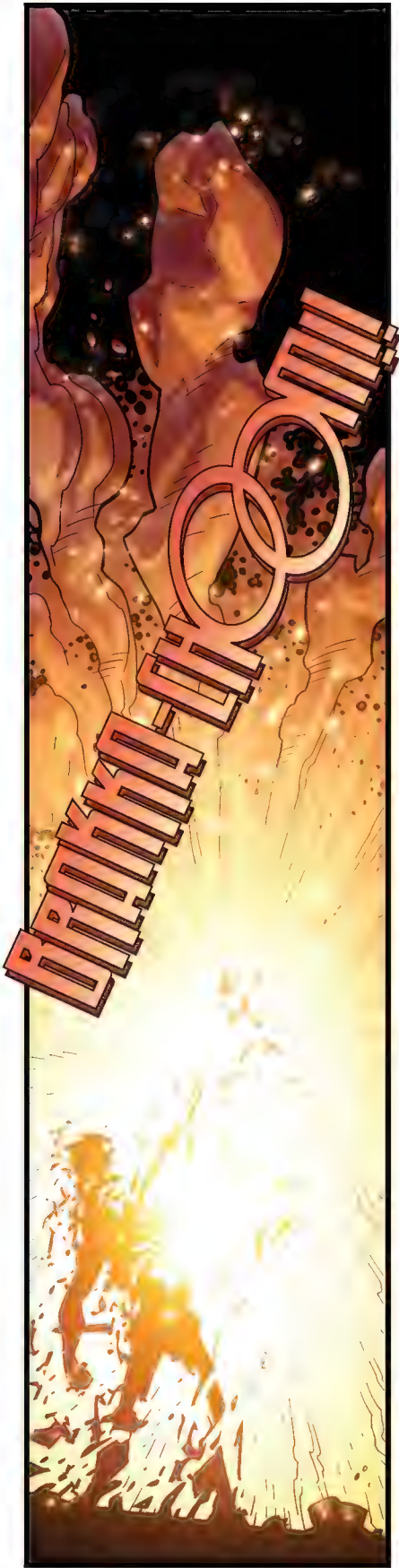


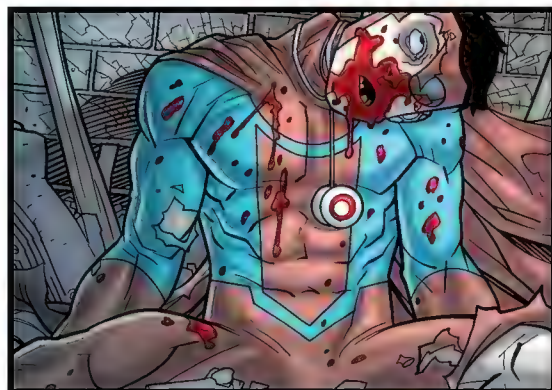
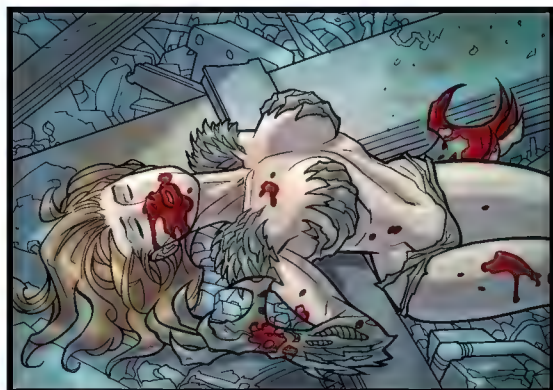
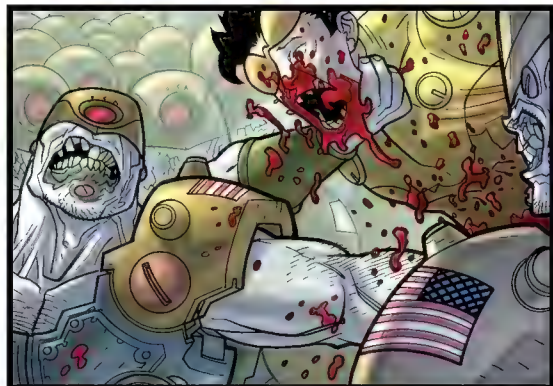
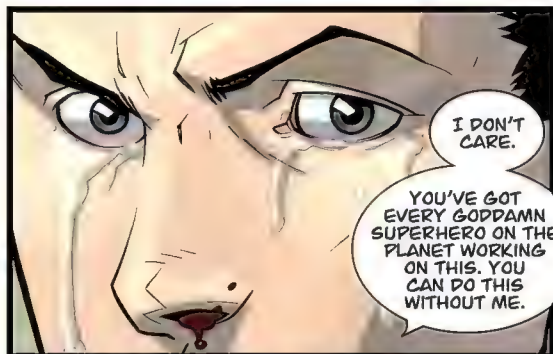
THAT WAS A FUTILE GESTURE, REX. I'M GOING TO POP YOUR HEAD OFF AND THEN FLY OFF TO MURDER ALL THREE OF THEM.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AGAINST ME? YOU'RE OUT OF BATONS AND GOLF BALLS AND WHATEVER YOU KEPT IN YOUR POCKETS--YOUR WRIST LAUNCHER IS SPENT--YOU'VE GOT NOTHING. NO WAY OF ATTACKING ME.

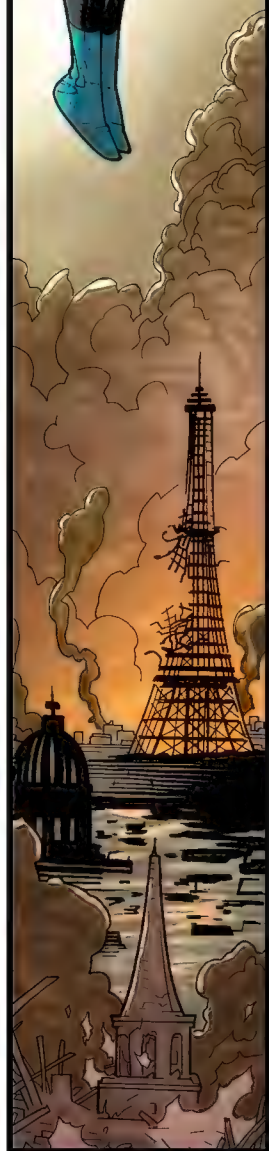
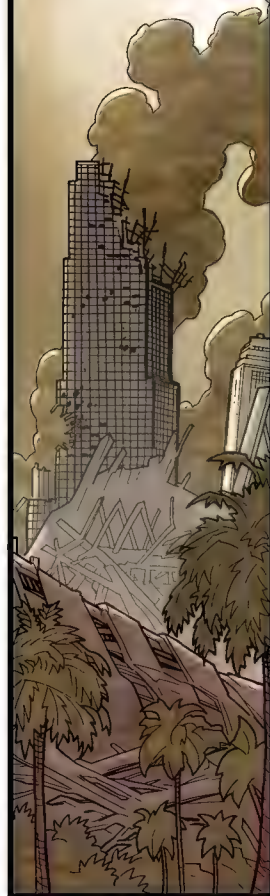
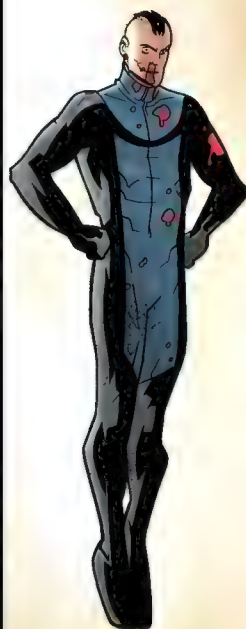
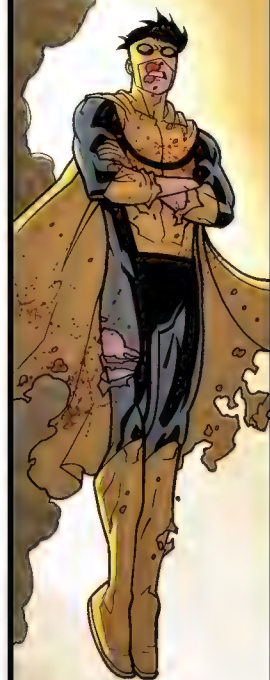
SO TELL ME--HOW ARE YOU GOING TO KILL ME? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO CHARGE AND EXPLODE?

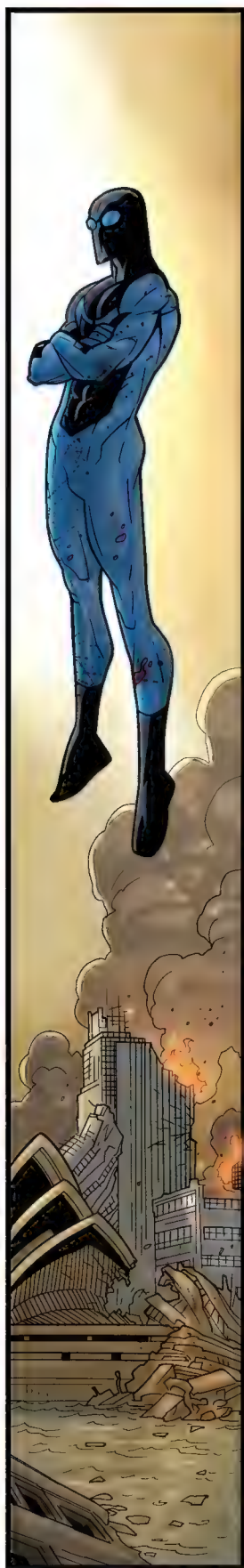
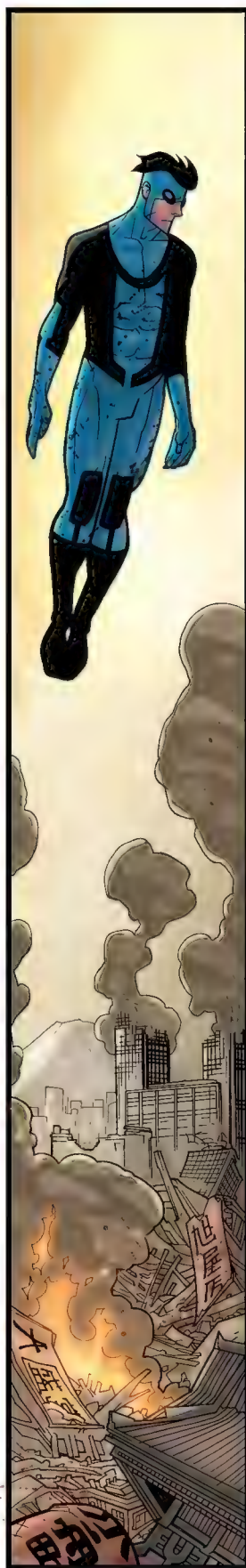
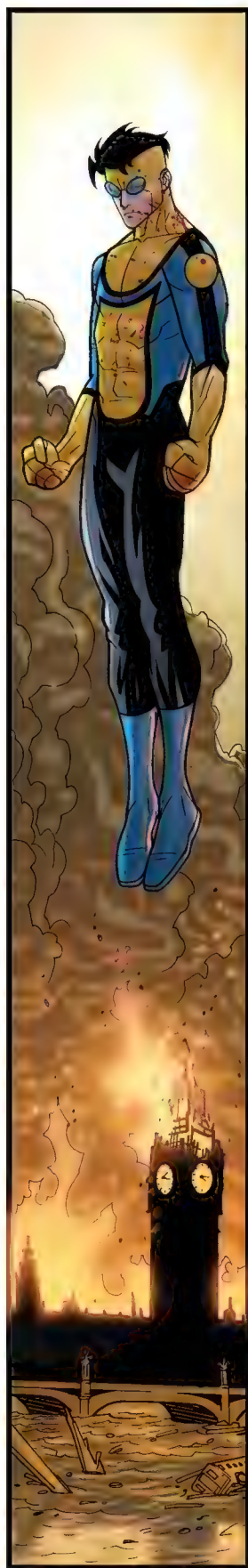
MY SKELETON.

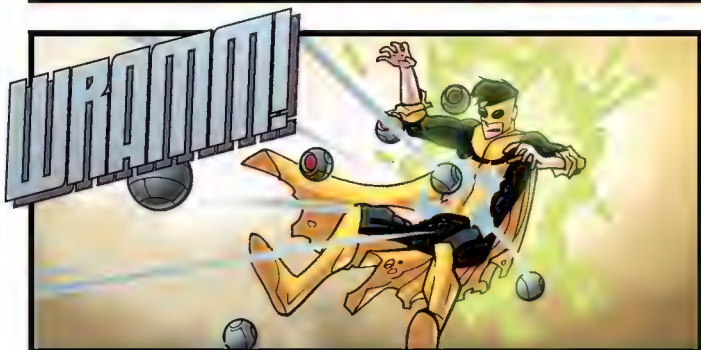




DAY THREE.









HOW DISAPPOINTING.



ANGSTROM!
YOU CAN'T
STRAND US
HERE!!

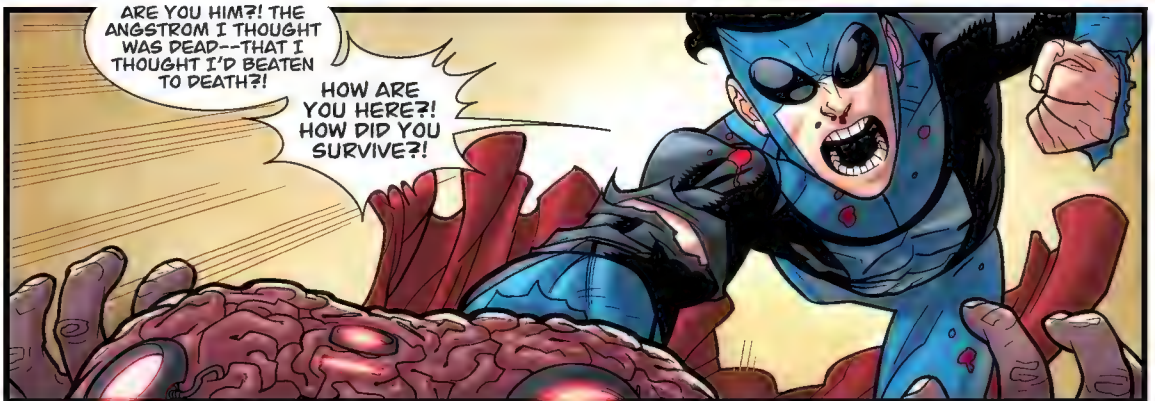
WE WILL
FIND A WAY
OUT OF HERE!
WE WILL FIND
YOU--AND WE
WILL KILL
YOU!

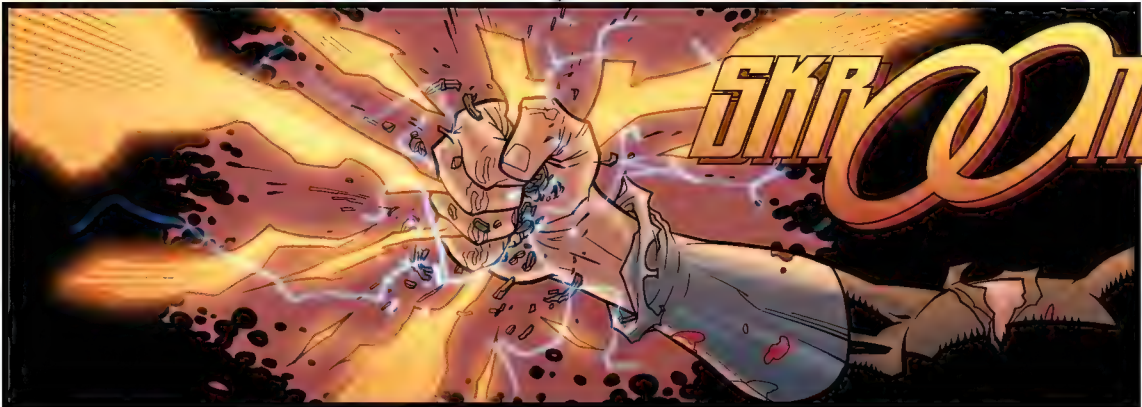
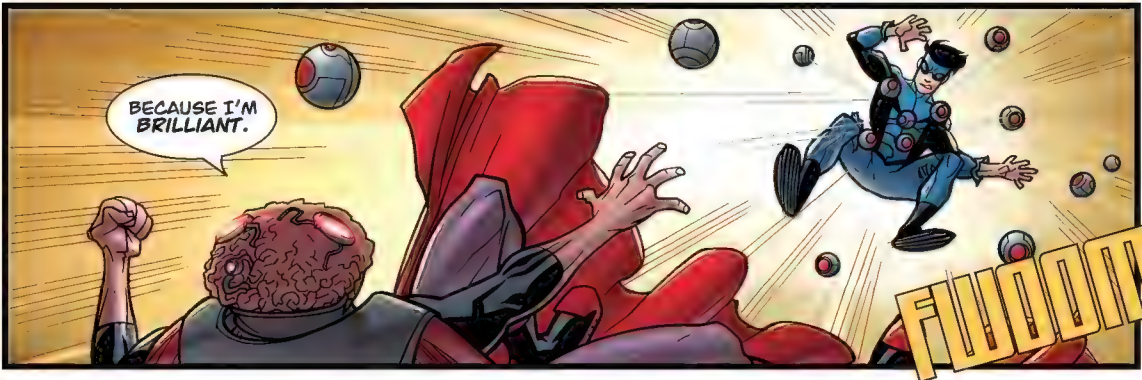


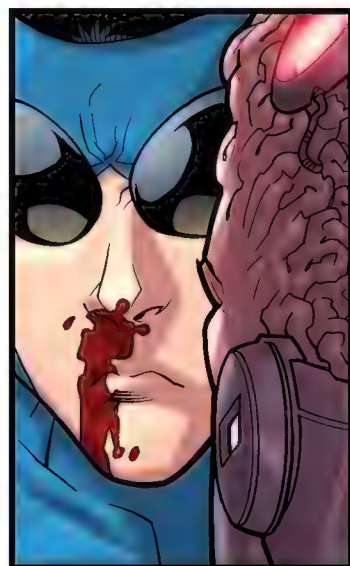
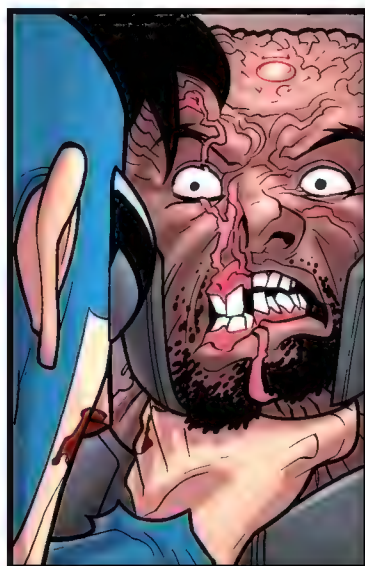
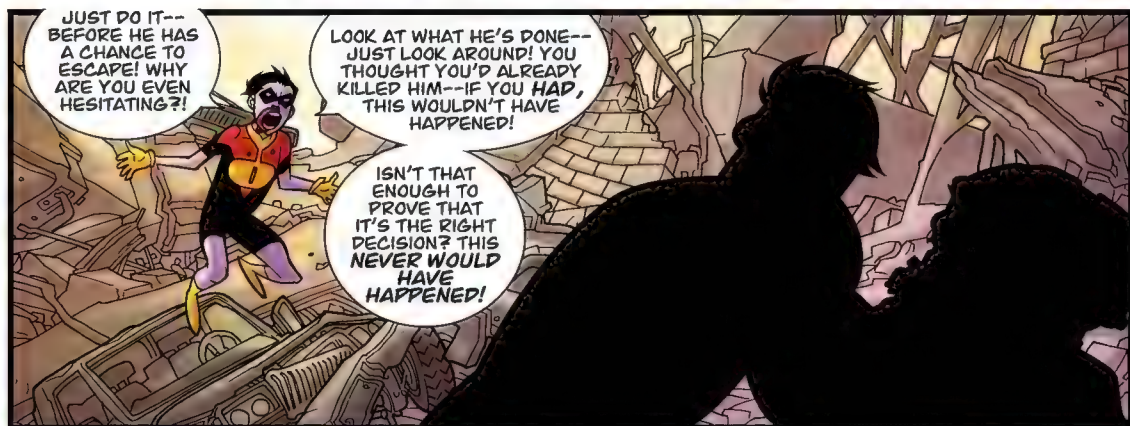
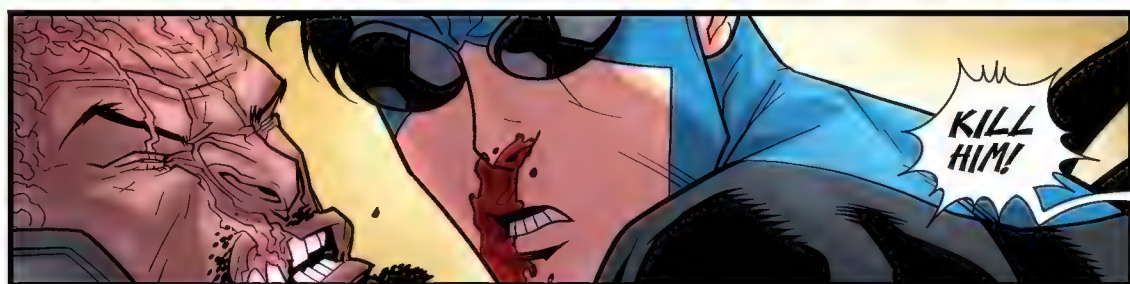
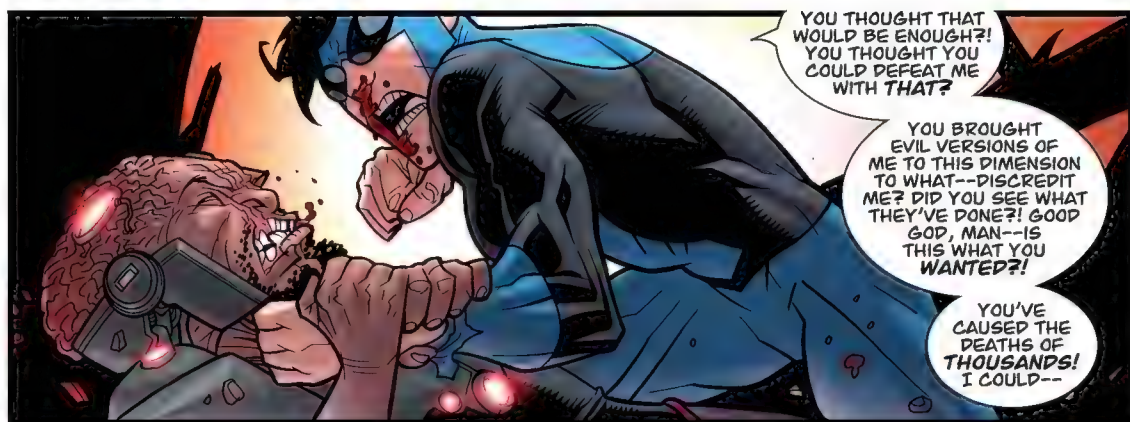
YOU!

I KNEW
IT WAS
YOU!!

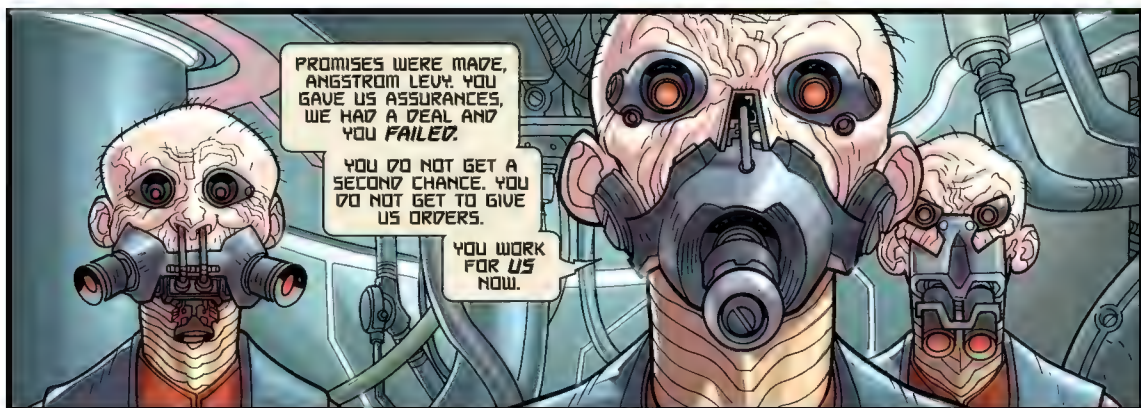
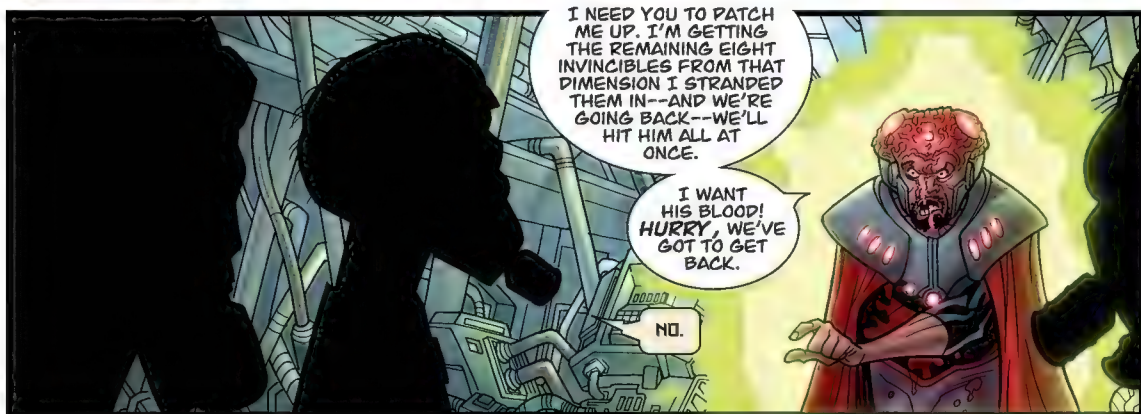
OH,
GOOD,
YOU CAME
TO ME.

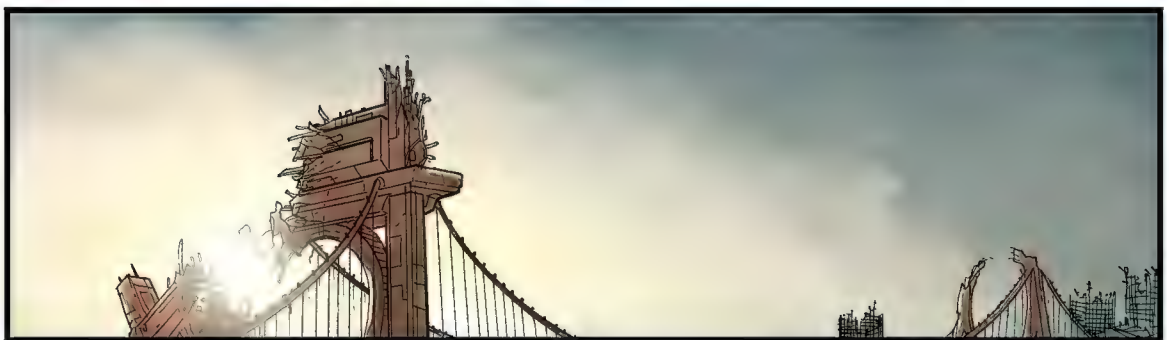
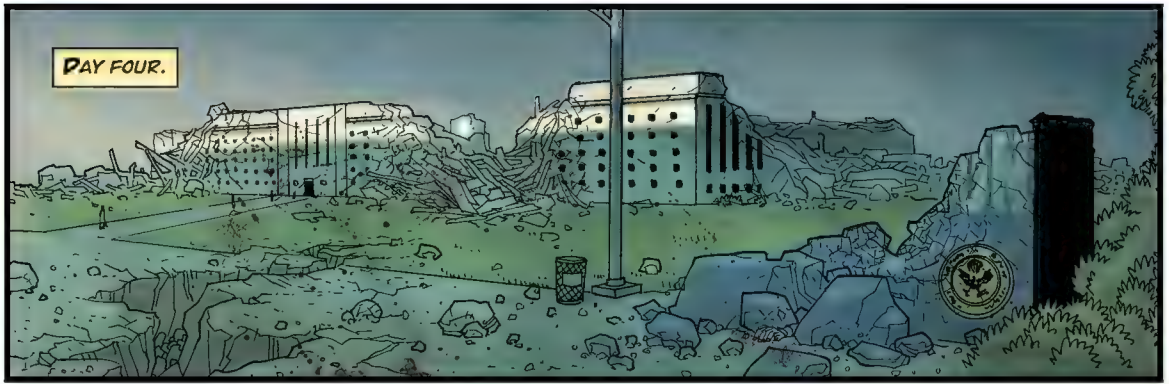










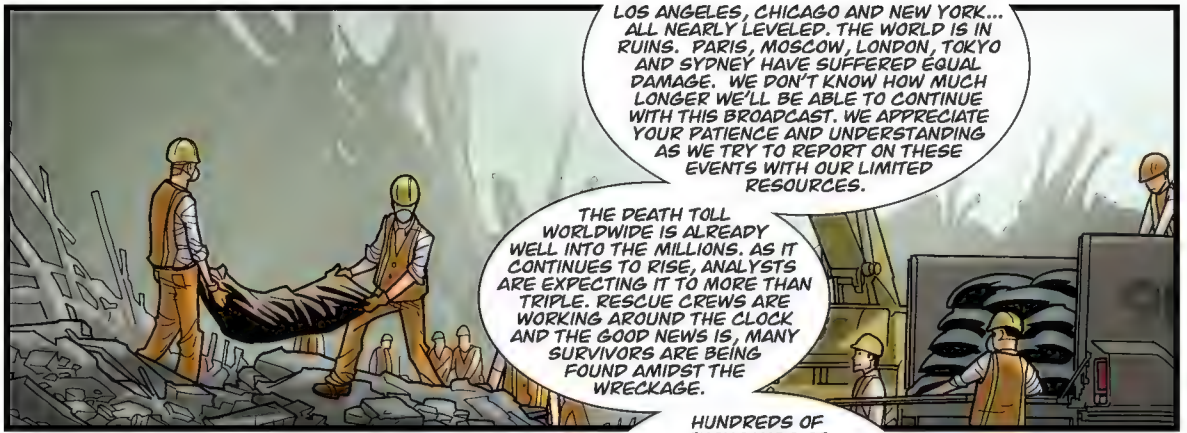






CHAPTER 61





LOS ANGELES, CHICAGO AND NEW YORK... ALL NEARLY LEVELLED. THE WORLD IS IN RUINS. PARIS, MOSCOW, LONDON, TOKYO AND SYDNEY HAVE SUFFERED EQUAL DAMAGE. WE DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER WE'LL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE WITH THIS BROADCAST. WE APPRECIATE YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING AS WE TRY TO REPORT ON THESE EVENTS WITH OUR LIMITED RESOURCES.

THE DEATH TOLL WORLDWIDE IS ALREADY WELL INTO THE MILLIONS. AS IT CONTINUES TO RISE, ANALYSTS ARE EXPECTING IT TO MORE THAN TRIPLE. RESCUE CREWS ARE WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK AND THE GOOD NEWS IS, MANY SURVIVORS ARE BEING FOUND AMIDST THE WRECKAGE.

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES HAVE BEEN DISPLACED BY THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS. MAKESHIFT REFUGEE CAMPS LIKE THIS ONE JUST OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK CITY ARE SPRINGING UP ALL OVER THE WORLD.

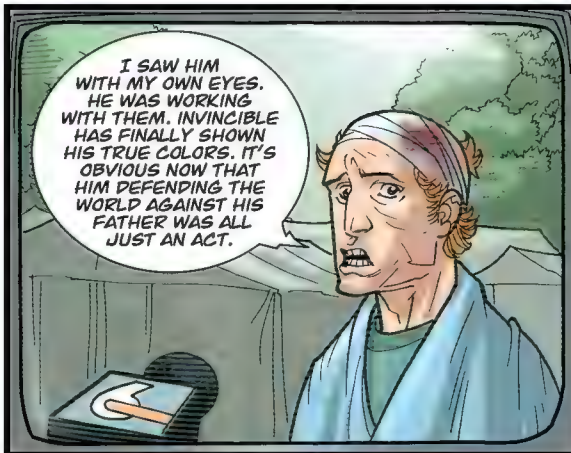
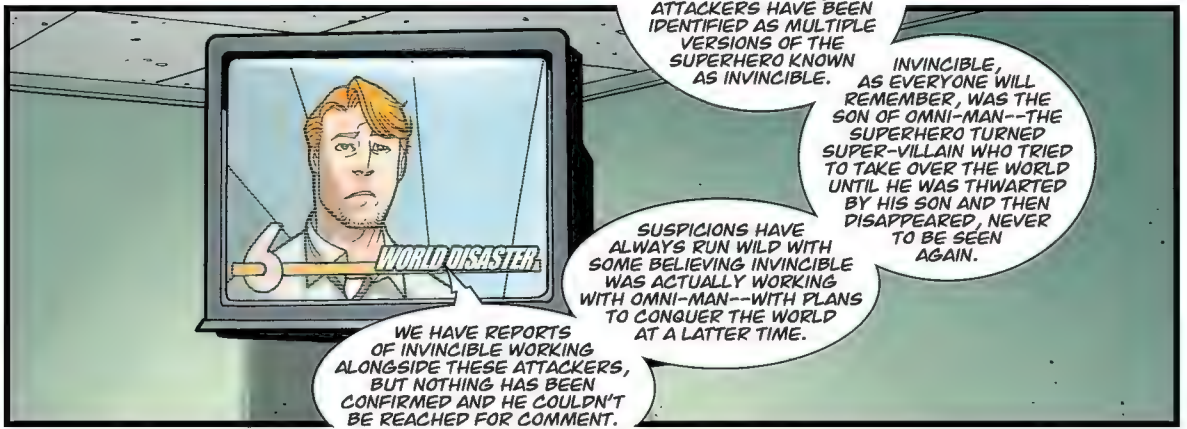
THE RED CROSS IS REPORTING THAT THIS DISASTER FAR EXCEEDS THEIR CAPABILITIES, AND THEY'RE ASKING FOR EVERY CITIZEN IN A POSITION TO HELP TO DO SO.

ALL OF THIS STILL LEAVES US WITH THE QUESTION-- WHY? WHY HAS THIS HAPPENED? WHILE THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION MAY NEVER COME, THE ATTACKERS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF THE SUPERHERO KNOWN AS INVINCIBLE.

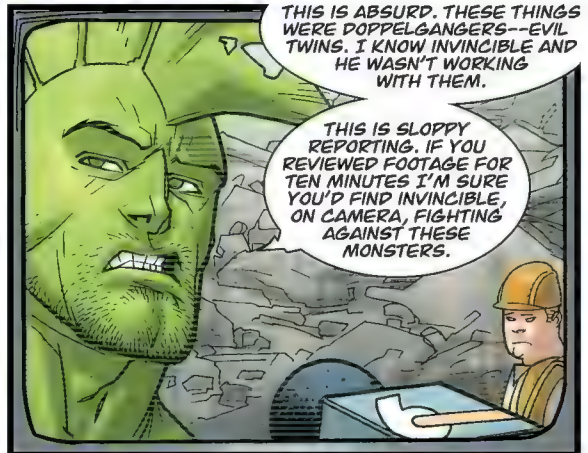
INVINCIBLE, AS EVERYONE WILL REMEMBER, WAS THE SON OF OMNI-MAN--THE SUPERHERO TURNED SUPER-VILLAIN WHO TRIED TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD UNTIL HE WAS THWARTED BY HIS SON AND THEN DISAPPEARED, NEVER TO BE SEEN AGAIN.

SUSPICIONS HAVE ALWAYS RUN WILD WITH SOME BELIEVING INVINCIBLE WAS ACTUALLY WORKING WITH OMNI-MAN--WITH PLANS TO CONQUER THE WORLD AT A LATTER TIME.

WE HAVE REPORTS OF INVINCIBLE WORKING ALONGSIDE THESE ATTACKERS, BUT NOTHING HAS BEEN CONFIRMED AND HE COULDN'T BE REACHED FOR COMMENT.

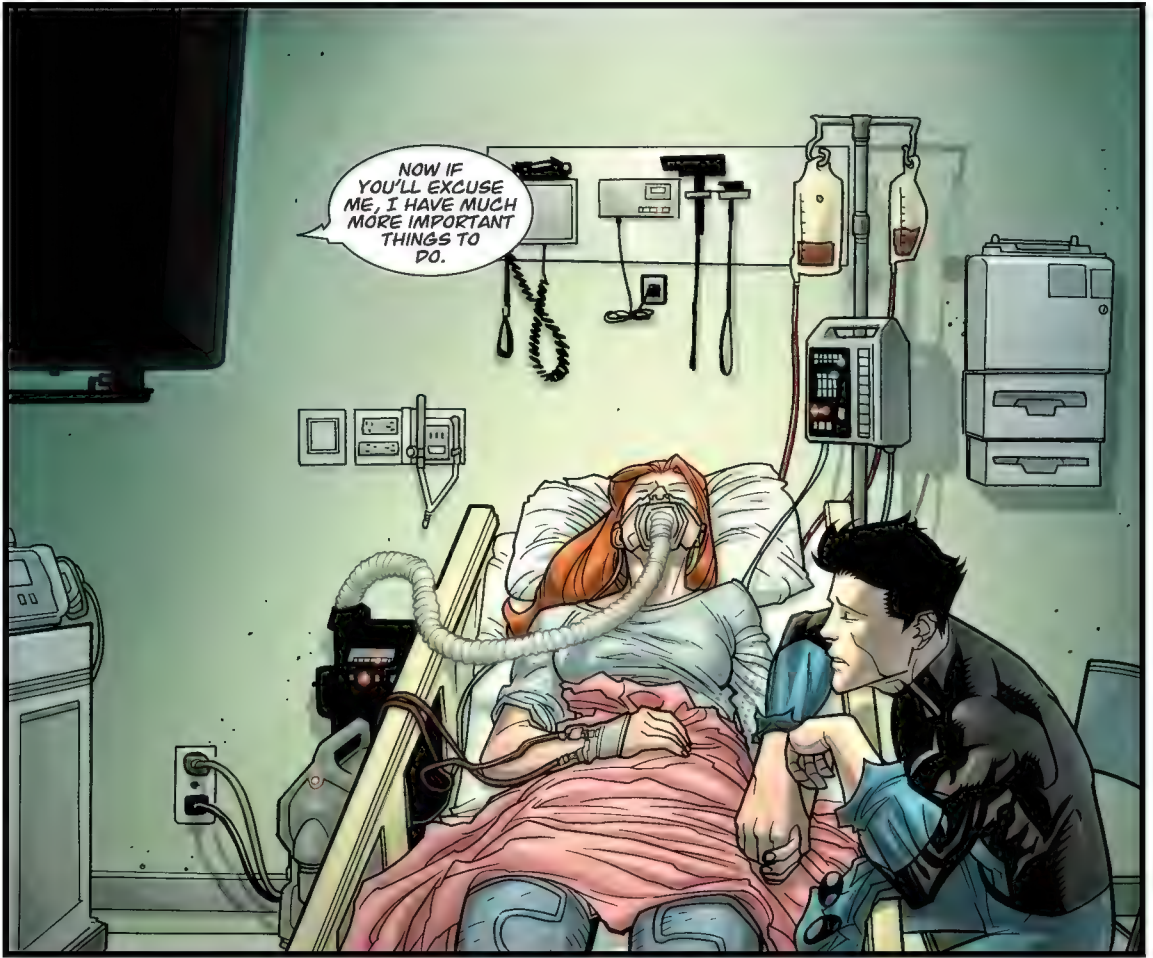


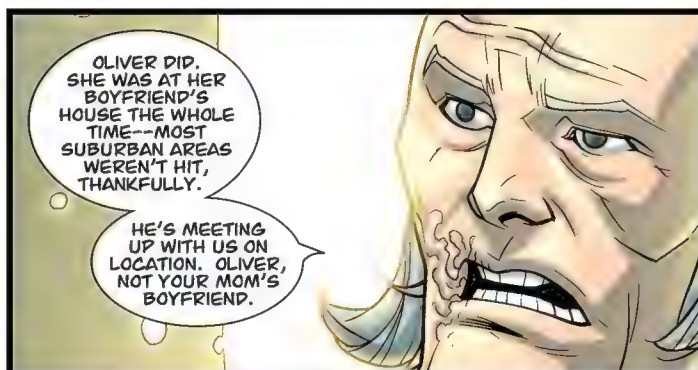
I SAW HIM WITH MY OWN EYES. HE WAS WORKING WITH THEM. INVINCIBLE HAS FINALLY SHOWN HIS TRUE COLORS. IT'S OBVIOUS NOW THAT HIM DEFENDING THE WORLD AGAINST HIS FATHER WAS ALL JUST AN ACT.



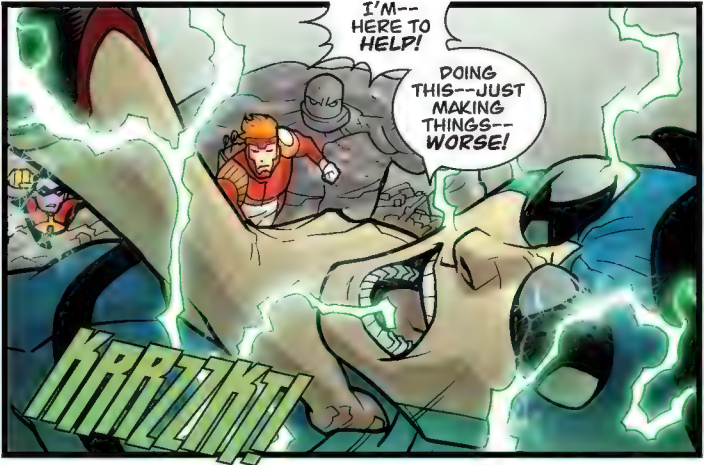
THIS IS ABSURD. THESE THINGS WERE DOPPELGANGERS--EVIL TWINS. I KNOW INVINCIBLE AND HE WASN'T WORKING WITH THEM.

THIS IS SLOPPY REPORTING. IF YOU REVIEWED FOOTAGE FOR TEN MINUTES I'M SURE YOU'D FIND INVINCIBLE, ON CAMERA, FIGHTING AGAINST THESE MONSTERS.



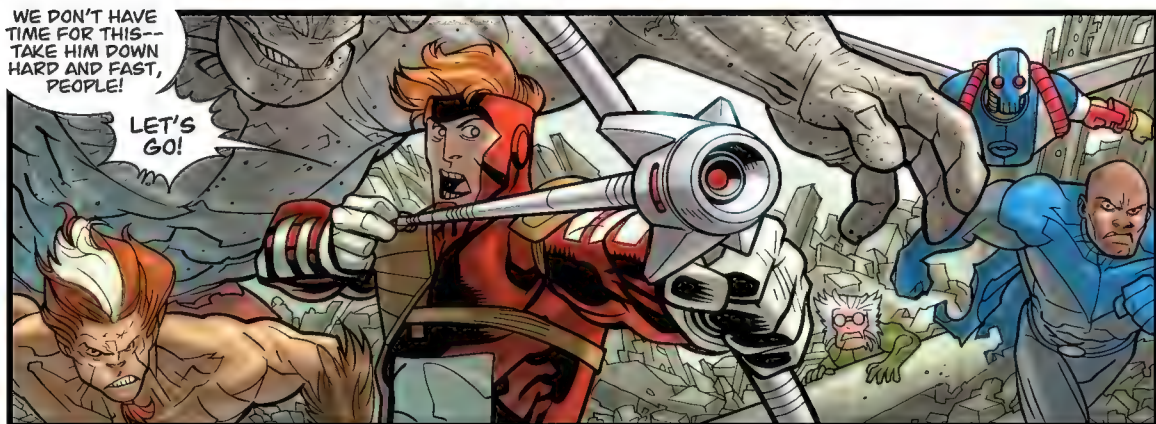




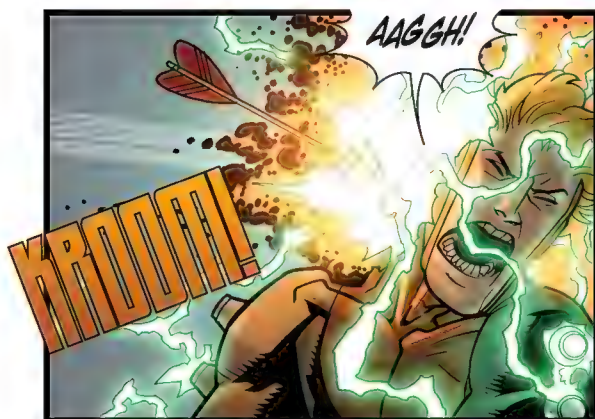


WE DON'T HAVE
TIME FOR THIS--
TAKE HIM DOWN
HARD AND FAST,
PEOPLE!

LET'S
GO!



AAGGH!



THINK THEY'VE
GOT THIS ONE
COVERED, KID
THOR.

C'MON,
THERE'S
WORK TO
BE DONE,
LIVES TO
SAVE.



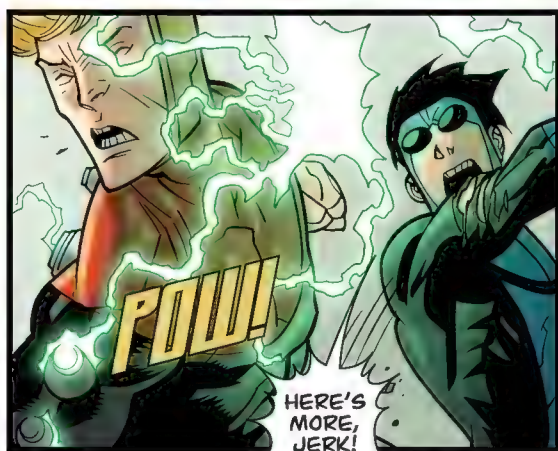
YOU'VE JUST
GIVEN ME ALL
THE ENERGY I
NEED TO TAKE
YOU DOWN!

IDIOT!



POW!

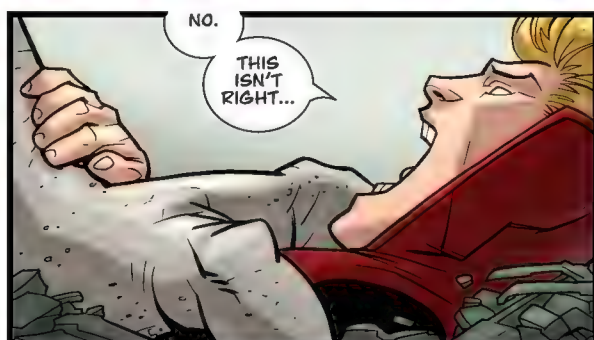
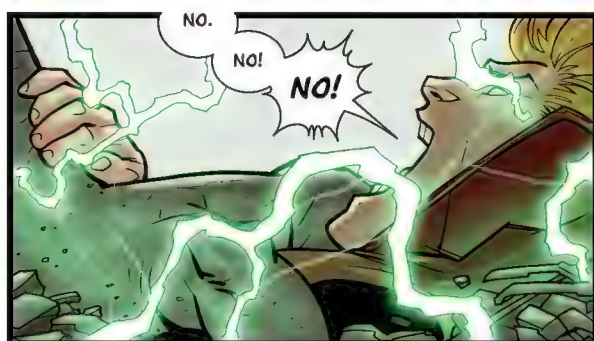
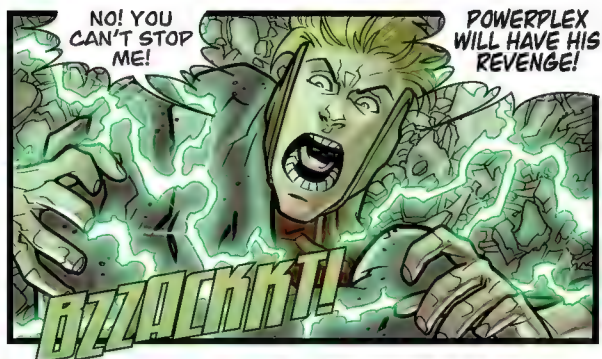
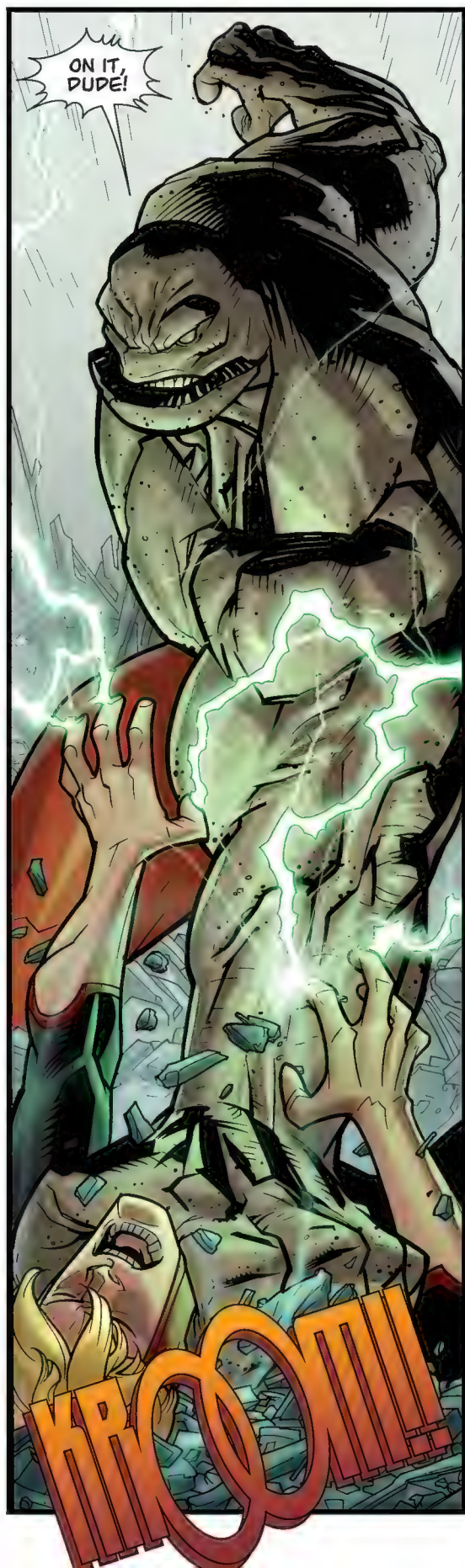
HERE'S
MORE,
JERK!



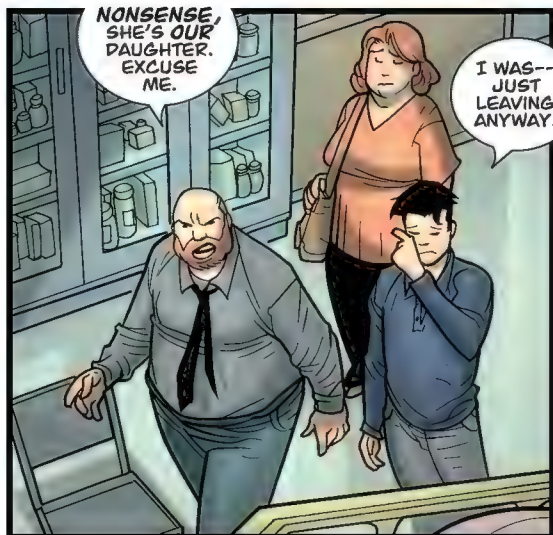
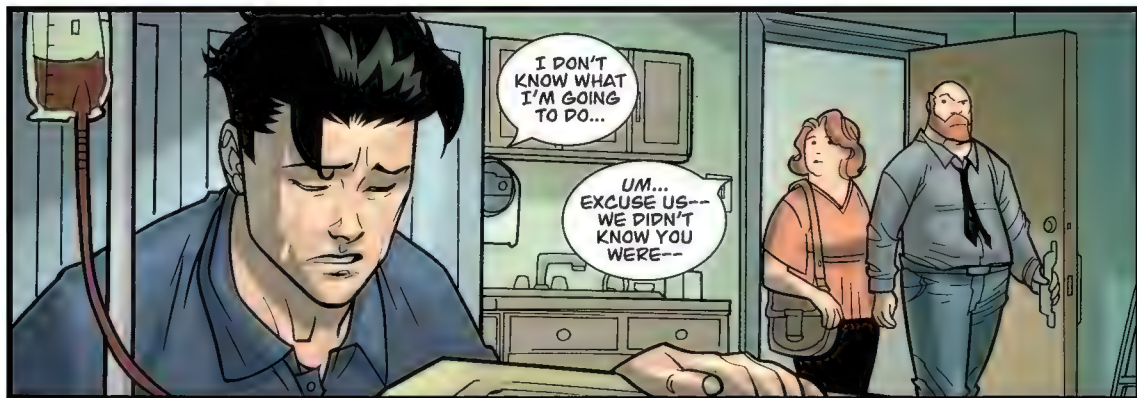
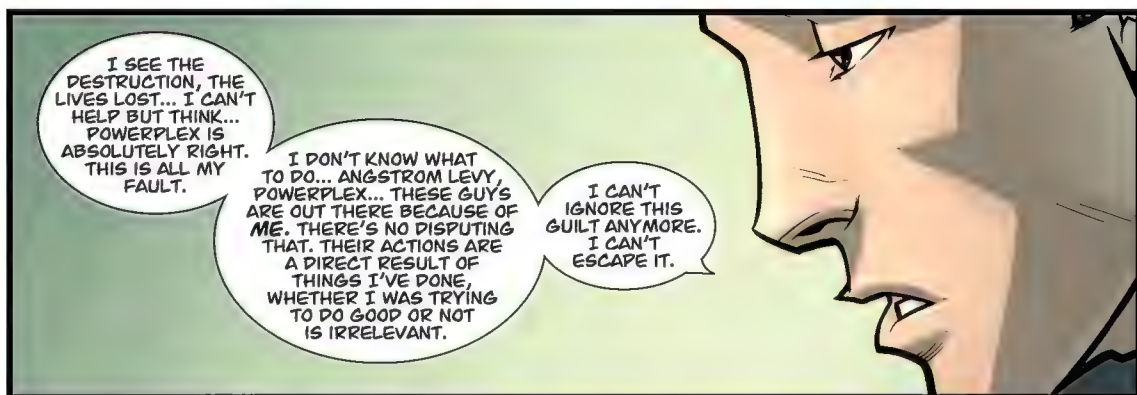
QUICK--
SOMEONE
PIN HIM
DOWN!

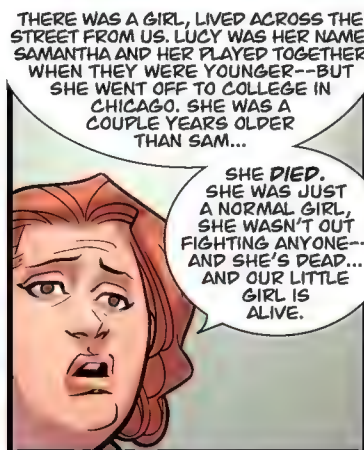
DON'T
LET HIM
MOVE!



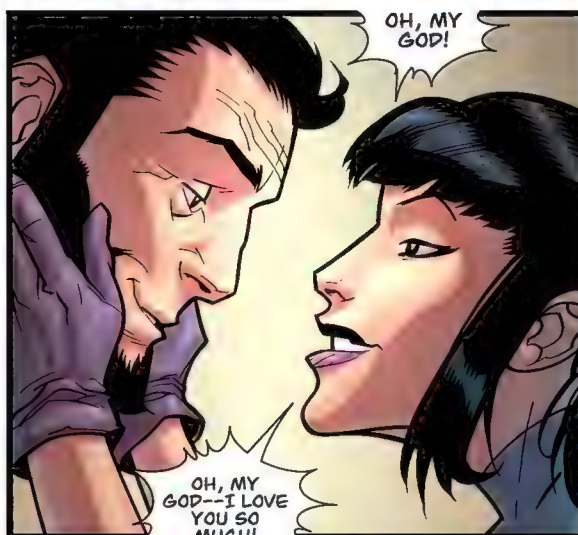
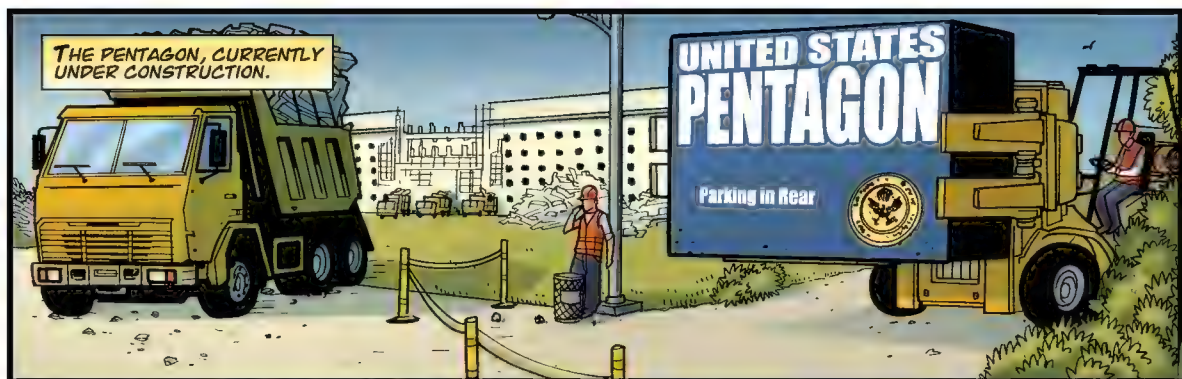














IMMORTAL AND DUPLI-KATE ARE RETIRING. DARKWING IS DEAD, SHAPESMITH IS INJURED--THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE ARE OUT OF COMMISSION.

THE WORLD IS LARGELY UNDEFENDED.

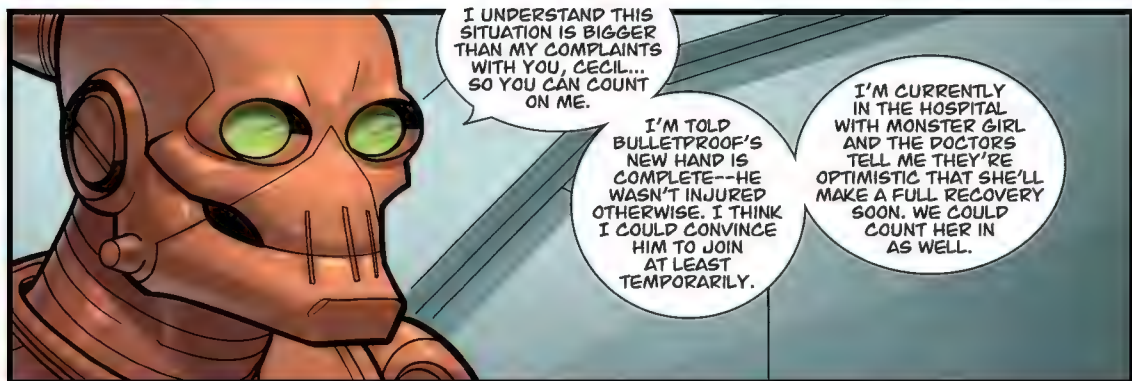
WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT, **FAST**. THAT'S WHY I CALLED YOU ALL HERE, DESPITE THE PAST DIFFERENCES I'VE HAD WITH SOME OF YOU.



SHAPESMITH SHOULD BE BACK UP TO SPEED SOON, HE HAS SOMETHING HE CALLS A "**CORE**" AND AS LONG AS THAT'S NOT DAMAGED HE SAYS HE'LL BE FINE. SO HE WAS LUCKY.

MORE LIKE **WE** WERE LUCKY. IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT FORMING A NEW TEAM, WE HAVE VERY FEW OPTIONS RIGHT NOW.

THAT'S THE MAIN ISSUE-- WE NEED A NEW TEAM **RIGHT NOW**. I DON'T THINK THE ENEMIES OF THE WORLD WILL BE KIND ENOUGH TO TAKE A BREAK WHILE WE REBUILD.



I UNDERSTAND THIS SITUATION IS BIGGER THAN MY COMPLAINTS WITH YOU, CECIL... SO YOU CAN COUNT ON ME.

I'M TOLD BULLETPROOF'S NEW HAND IS COMPLETE--HE WASN'T INJURED OTHERWISE. I THINK I COULD CONVINCE HIM TO JOIN AT LEAST TEMPORARILY.

I'M CURRENTLY IN THE HOSPITAL WITH MONSTER GIRL AND THE DOCTORS TELL ME THEY'RE OPTIMISTIC THAT SHE'LL MAKE A FULL RECOVERY SOON. WE COULD COUNT HER IN AS WELL.



WHAT ABOUT REX SPLODE?



REX IS DEAD.



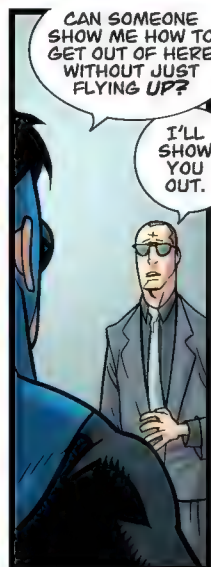
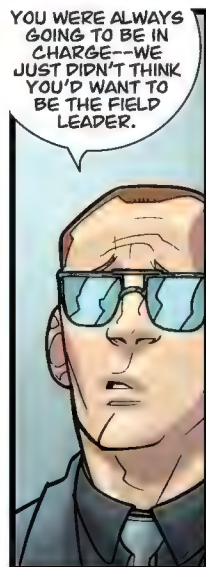
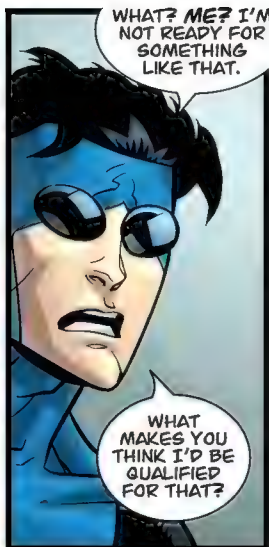
THERE'S NO TIME FOR THAT NOW.

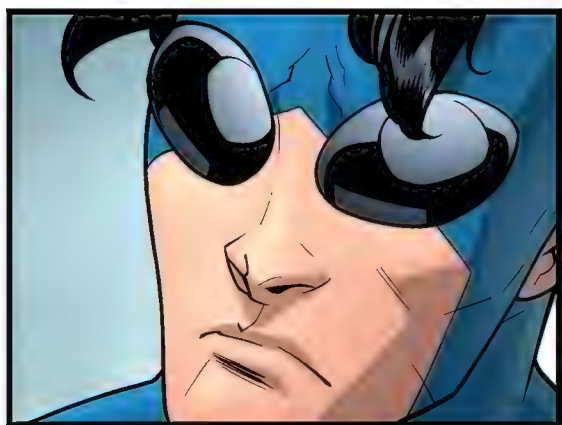
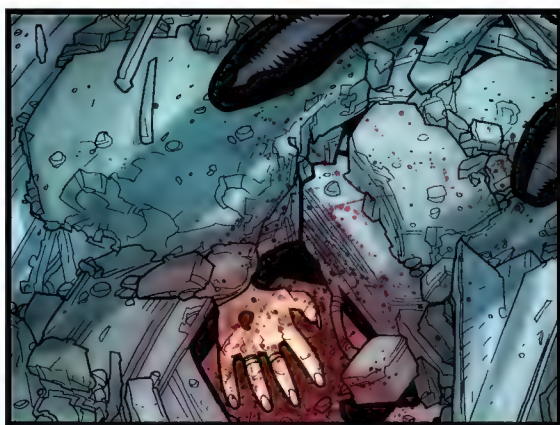
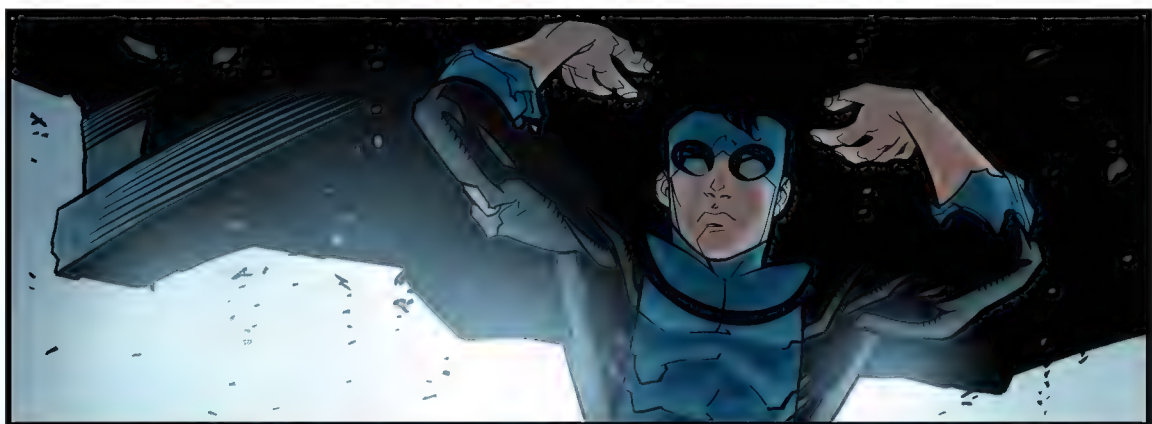
WE NEED TO GET THIS TEAM UP AND RUNNING BEFORE ANYONE REALIZES HOW VULNERABLE WE ARE.

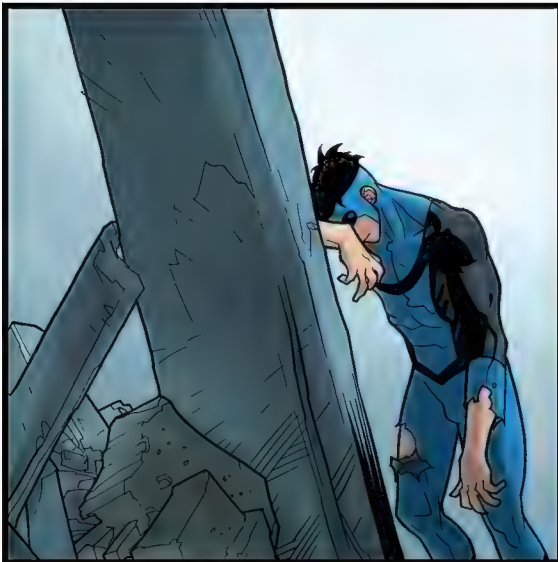
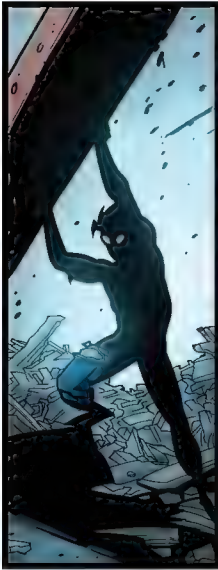


I DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE WORKING FOR YOU UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

WHY AM I HERE?









YOU HAVE
BEEN APPOINTED
THE VILTRUMITE
AGENT OF THIS
PLANET, CHARGED
WITH PREPARING IT
FOR EVENTUAL
TAKEOVER BY
OUR EMPIRE.

I AM HERE
TO CONFIRM YOUR
PROGRESS MADE
TOWARD THAT TASK...
IF THERE IS NONE,
I WILL ASSUME
YOUR DUTIES AND
TAKE OVER.

IF YOU
OPPOSE ME,
I WILL KILL
YOU.



THIS
ISN'T A
GOOD
TIME.



MAYBE YOU DO NOT
UNDERSTAND THE
SITUATION. THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE ANTICIPATED
YOUR RESISTANCE--
THAT IS WHY THEY
SENT **ME**,
SPECIFICALLY.

I AM
CONQUEST. I
HAVE NEVER FAILED
TO ASSIMILATE A
CHOSEN PLANET,
NO MATTER ITS
STRENGTH.

IF YOU
CHOOSE TO
OPPOSE ME,
YOU WILL **NOT**
SURVIVE.



MAYBE YOU DO
NOT UNDERSTAND. I
HAVE CAUSED **ALL**
THE DESTRUCTION YOU
SEE AROUND YOU. THE
LIVES LOST ARE A
DIRECT RESULT OF
MY ACTIONS.

I CAN'T
DESCRIBE THE
GUILT, SHAME... AND
MOST IMPORTANTLY
ANGER THAT I
FEEL RIGHT
NOW.

ALL I HAVE
THOUGHT ABOUT--
THE ONLY THING
I'VE WANTED SINCE
ALL OF THIS
HAPPENED...



...WAS SOMETHING
TO HIT AS HARD
AS I CAN.



VERY
WELL.





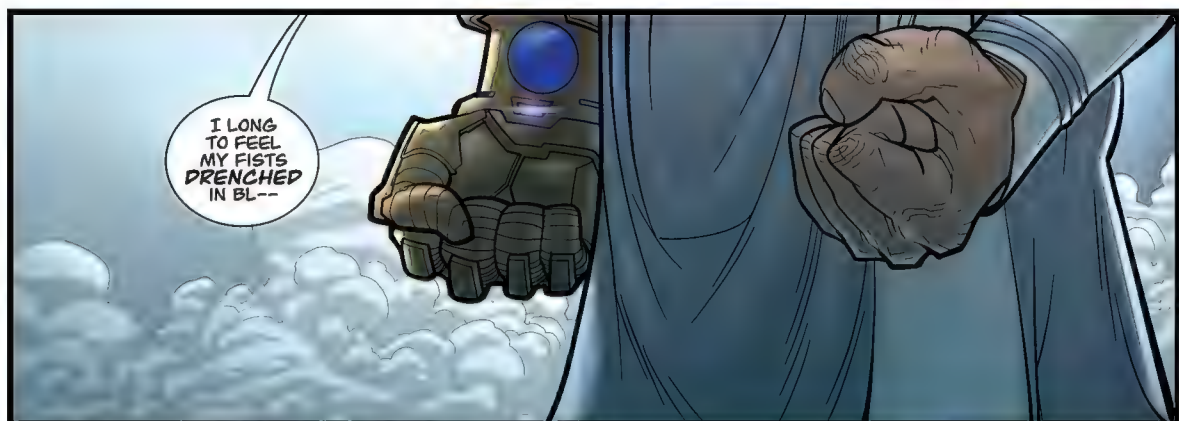
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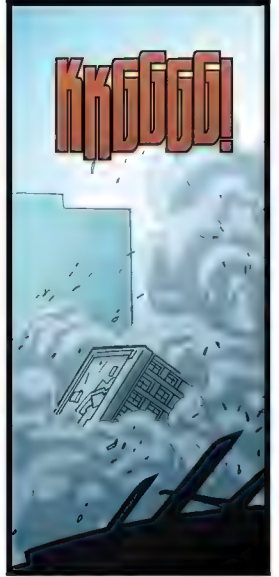
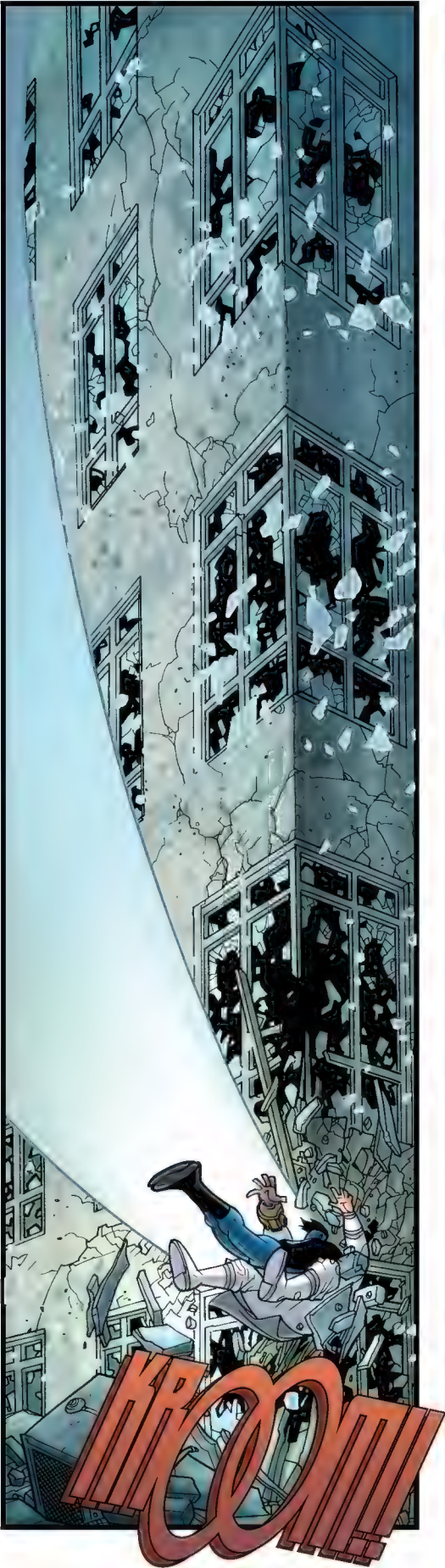


Ryan + fco

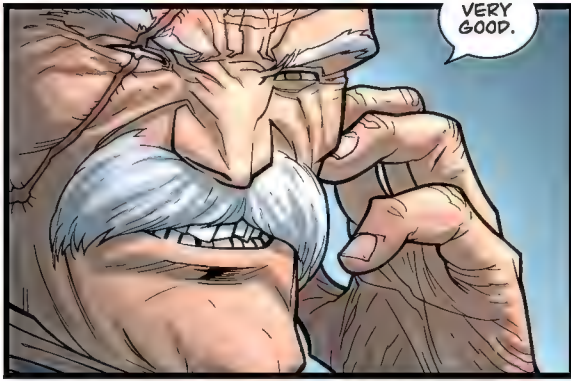


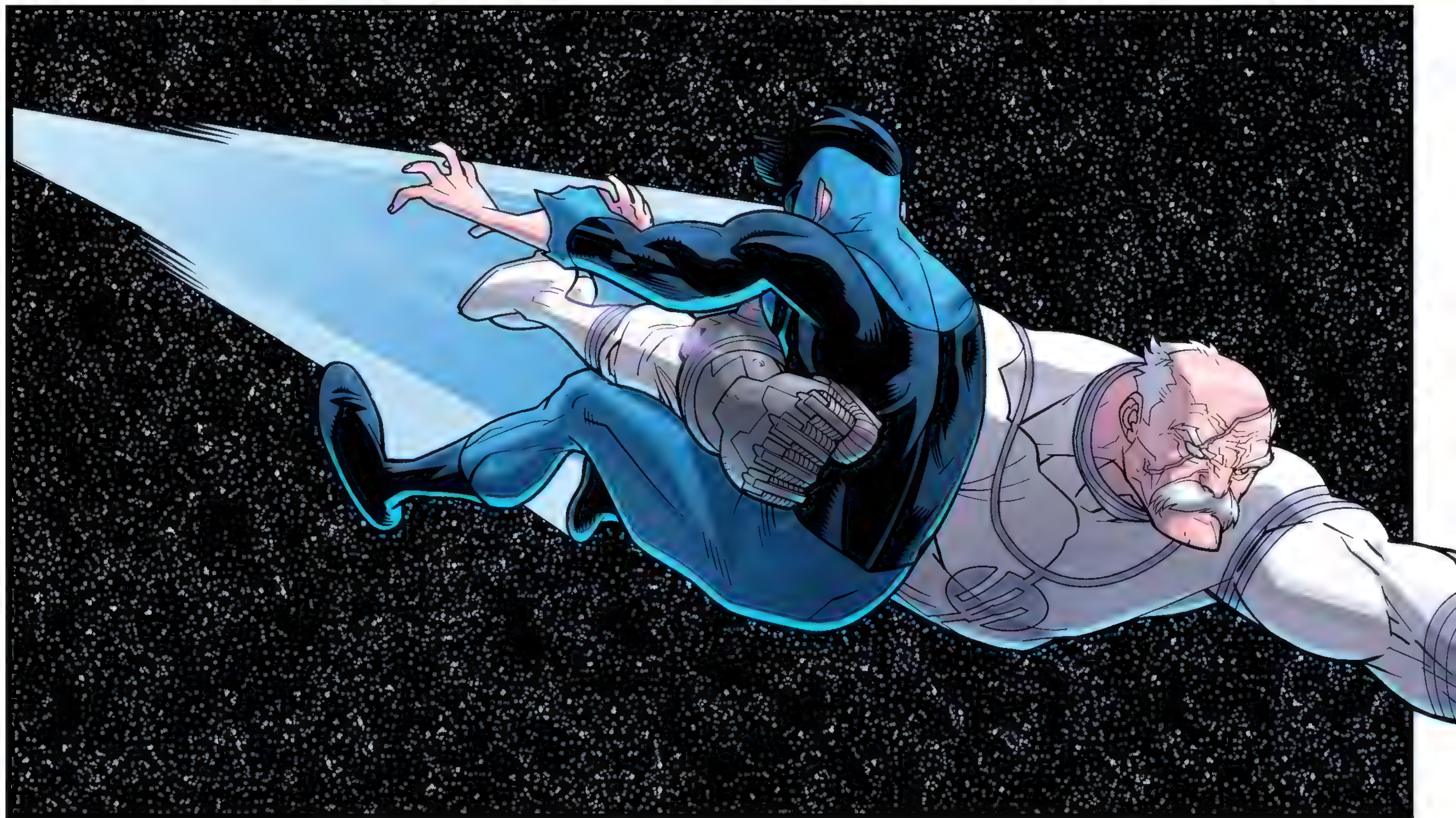


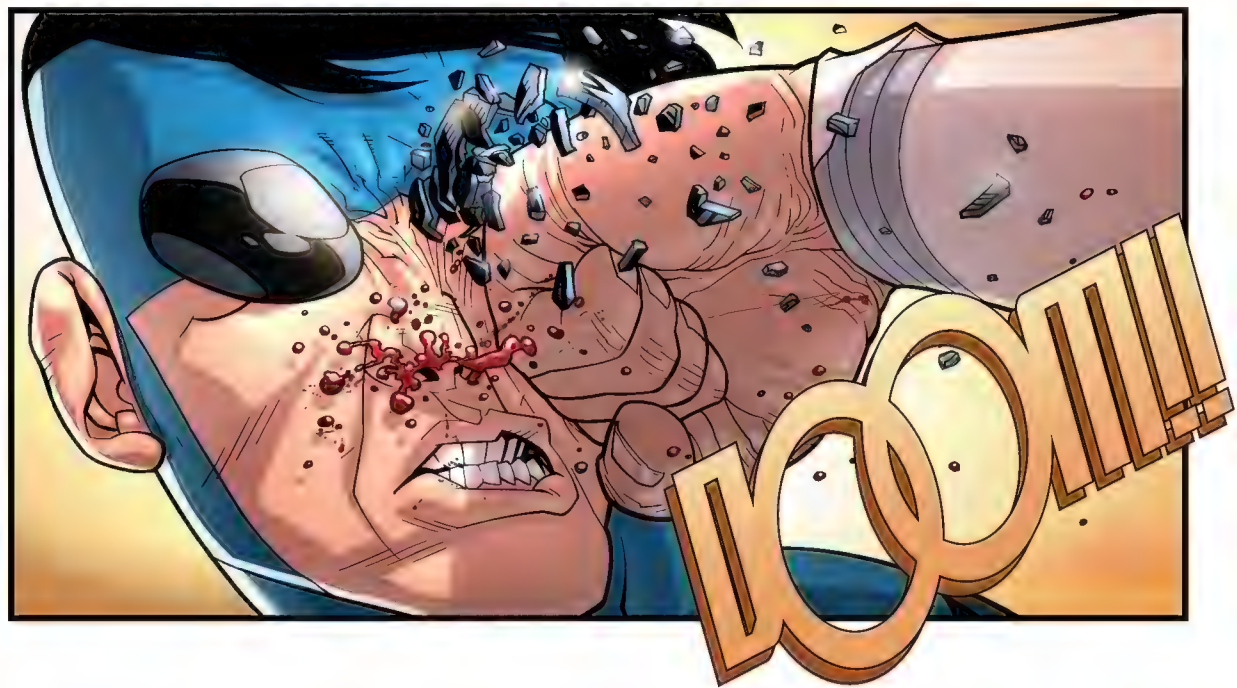
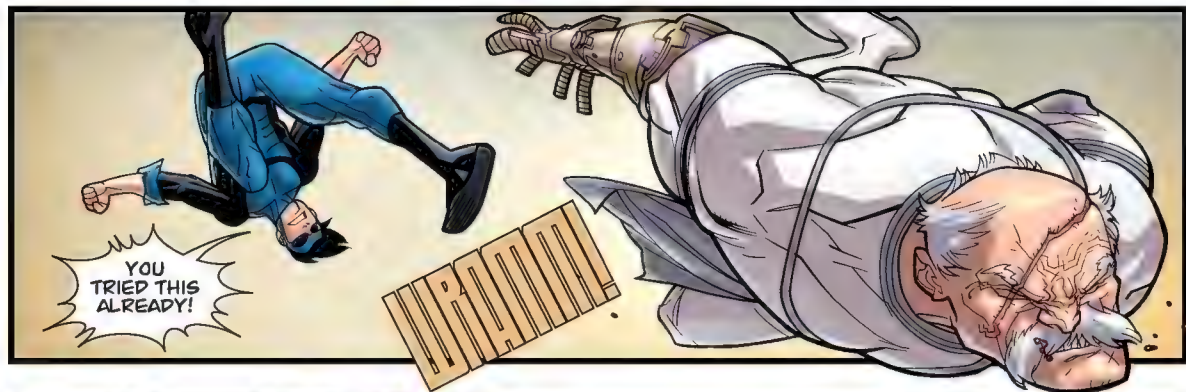


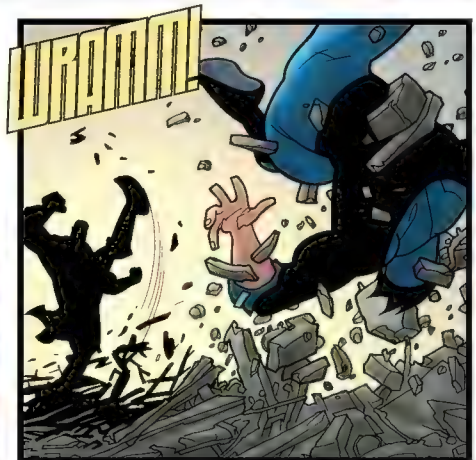
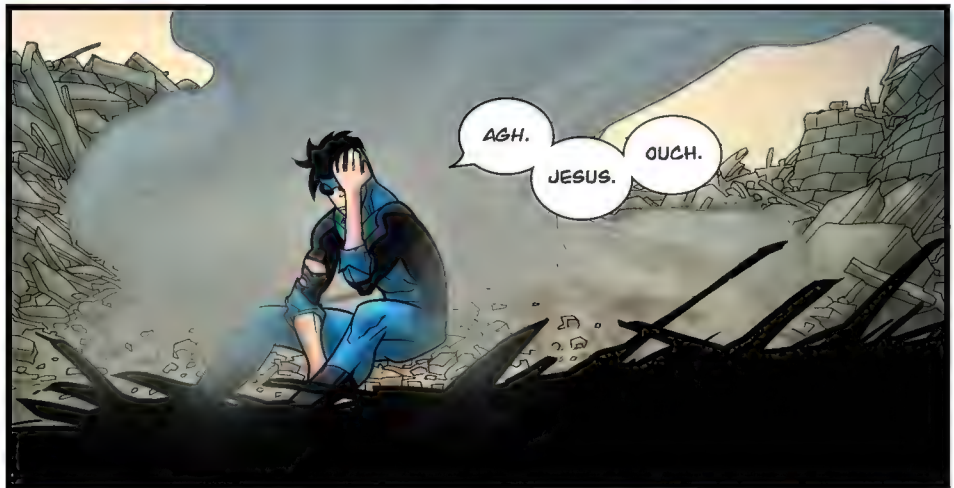
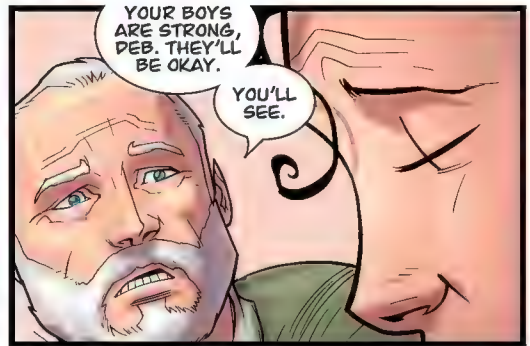


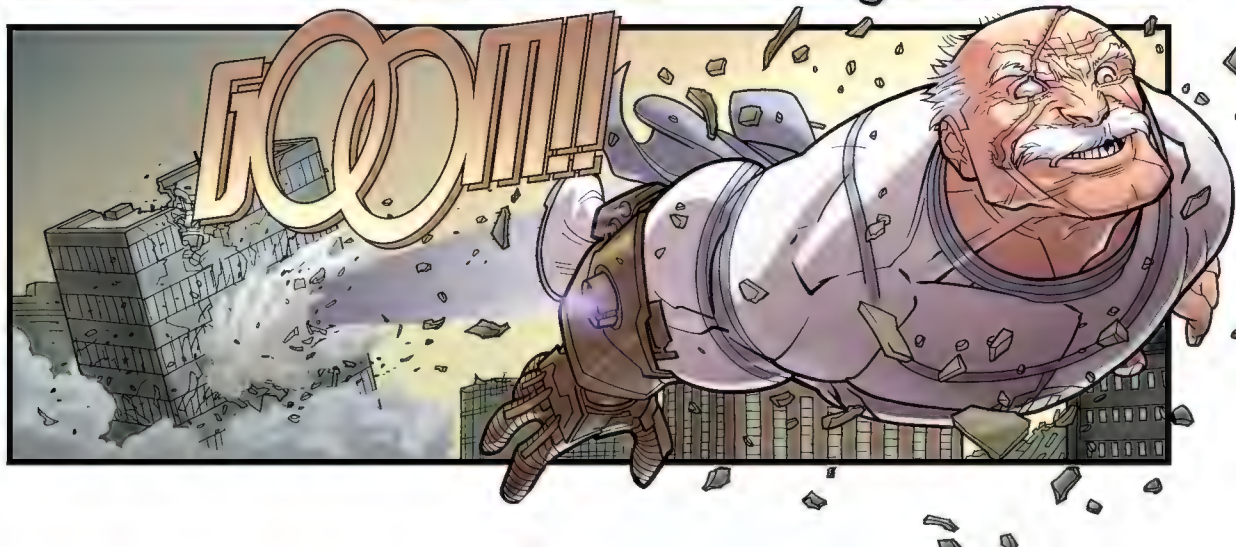
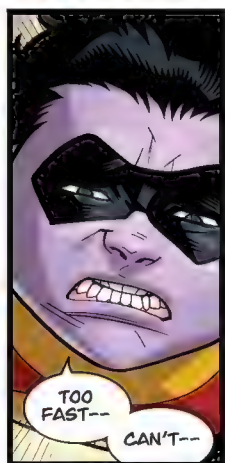
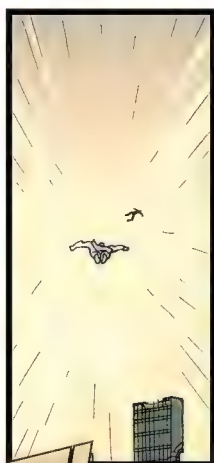


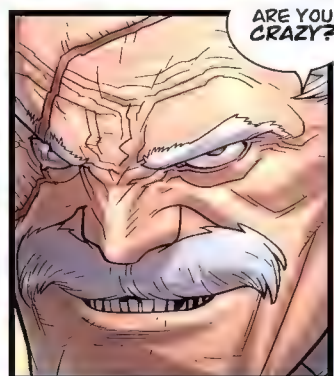
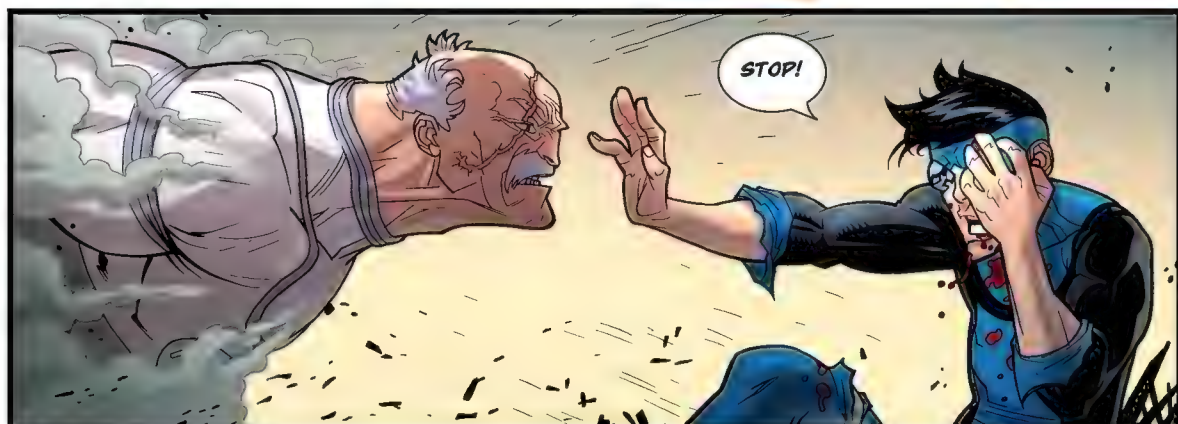


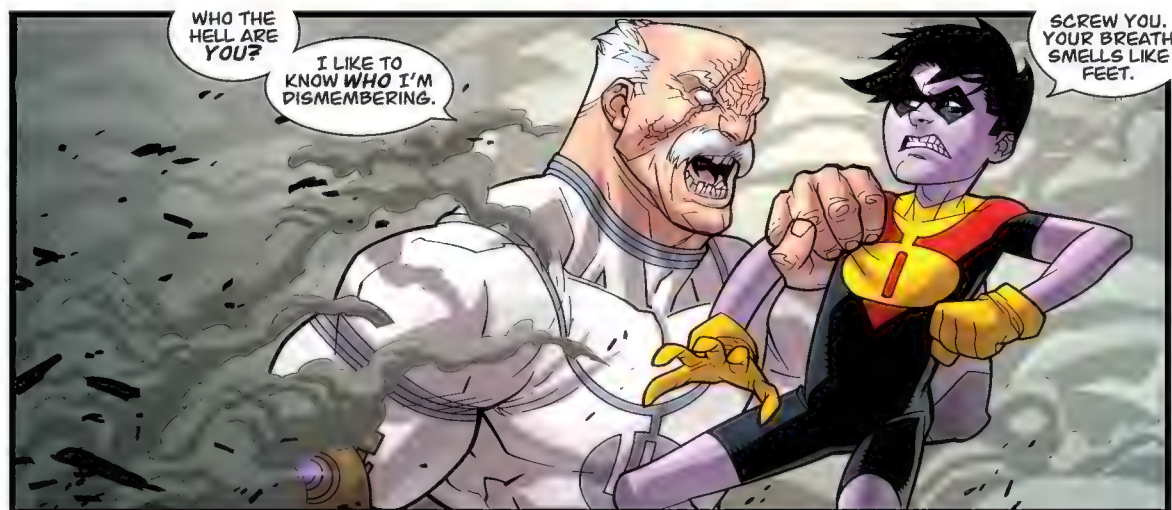














OLIVER--
GET OUT OF
HERE!



LET
GO OF
ME!

I'M HERE
TO HELP!
TOGETHER
WE CAN BEAT
THIS GUY!



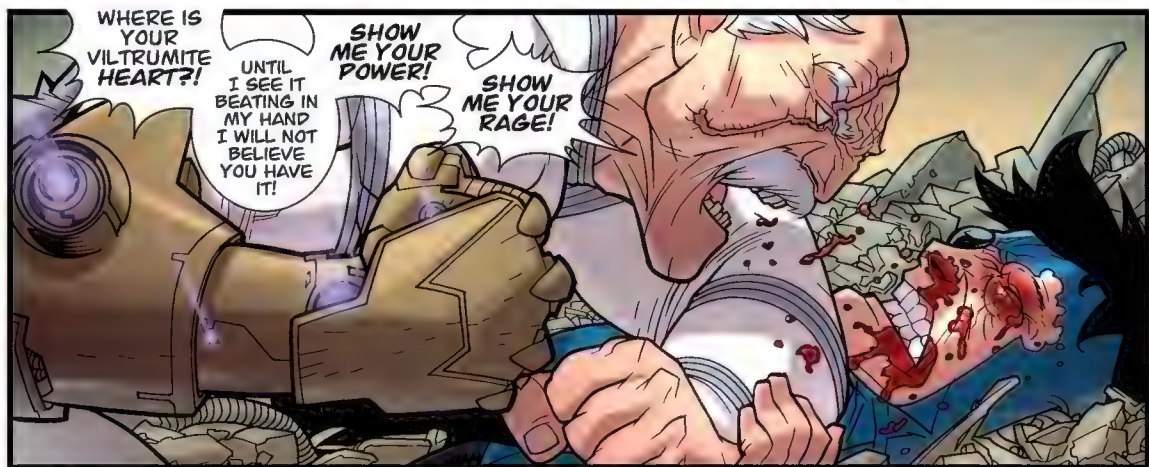
NO!

HE'LL
KILL
YOU!



YOU IDIOT! YOU
NEED ALL THE
HELP YOU CAN
GET!

THE TIME
I SPENT KILLING
HIM MIGHT HAVE
GIVEN YOU A
MOMENT TO GATHER
YOUR THOUGHTS--
MAYBE EVEN OUTWIT
ME. YOU ARE AN
EMBARRASSMENT.

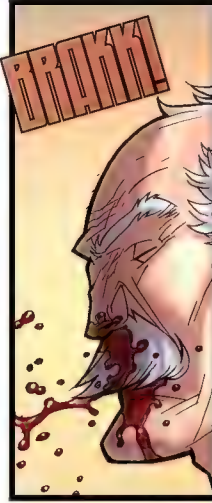
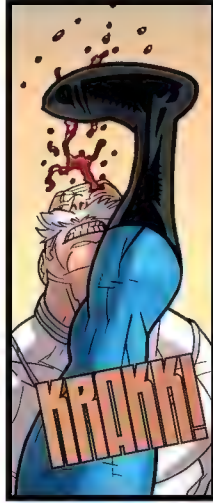
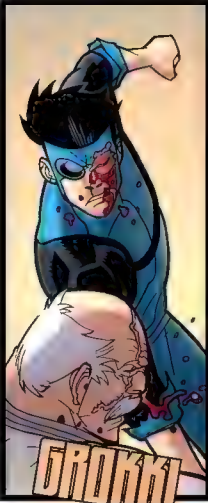
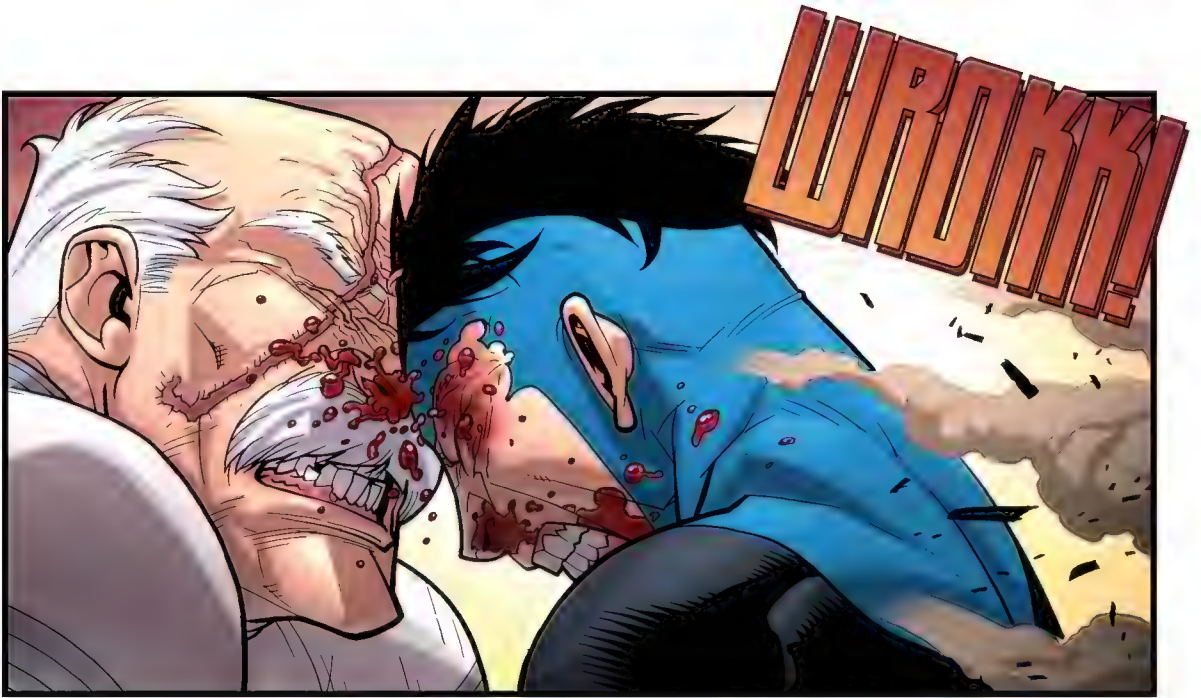


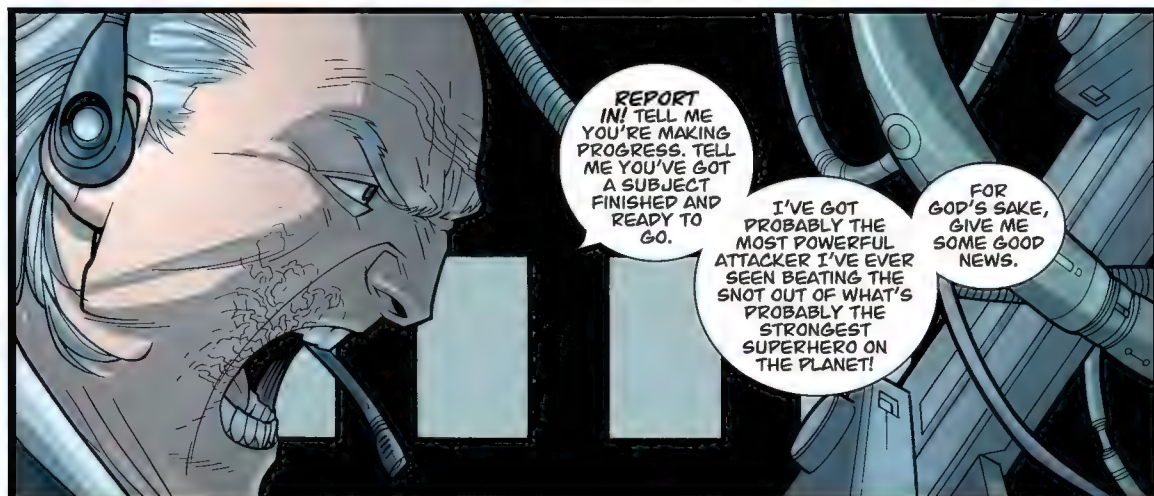
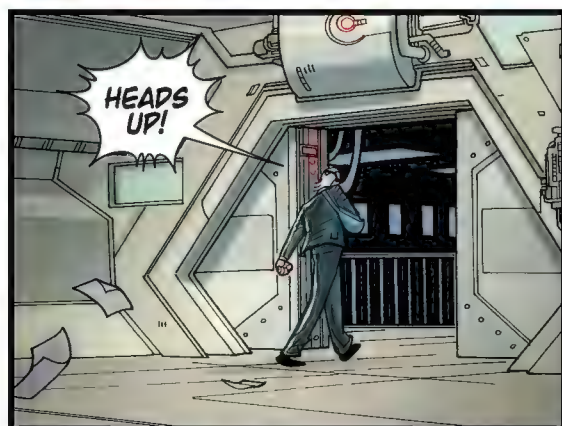
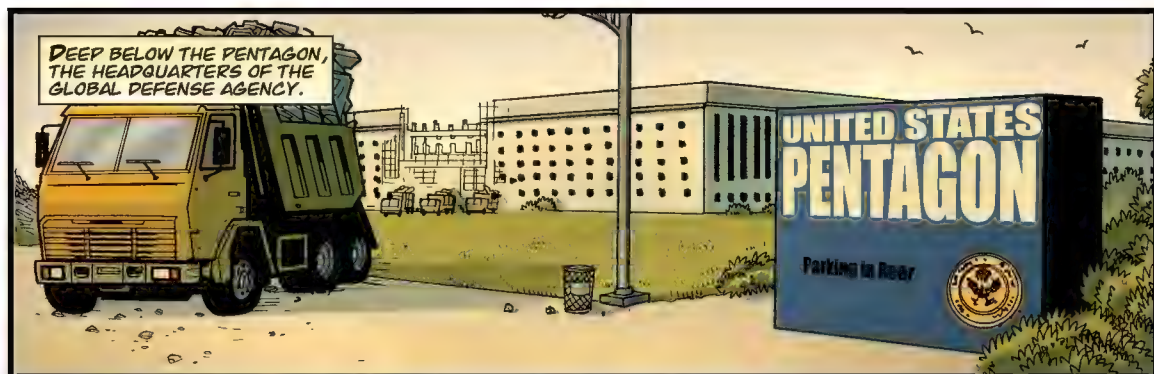
WHERE IS
YOUR
VILTRUMITE
HEART?!

UNTIL I SEE IT
BEATING IN
MY HAND
I WILL NOT
BELIEVE
YOU HAVE
IT!

SHOW
ME YOUR
POWER!

SHOW
ME YOUR
RAGE!







I'M AFRAID I CAN'T HELP YOU THERE. IT WOULD TAKE MY TEAM AND I TWO WEEKS OF NON-STOP WORK JUST TO GET SO MUCH AS ONE OF THESE ALTERNATE DIMENSION INVINCIBLES UP AND RUNNING.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW DENSE THEIR MUSCLE TISSUE IS--IT'S LIKE CUTTING THROUGH ROCK.

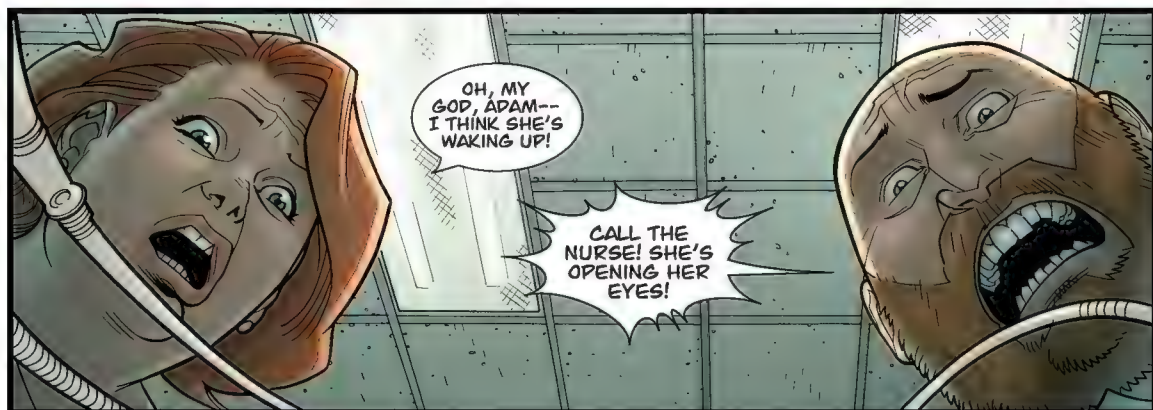
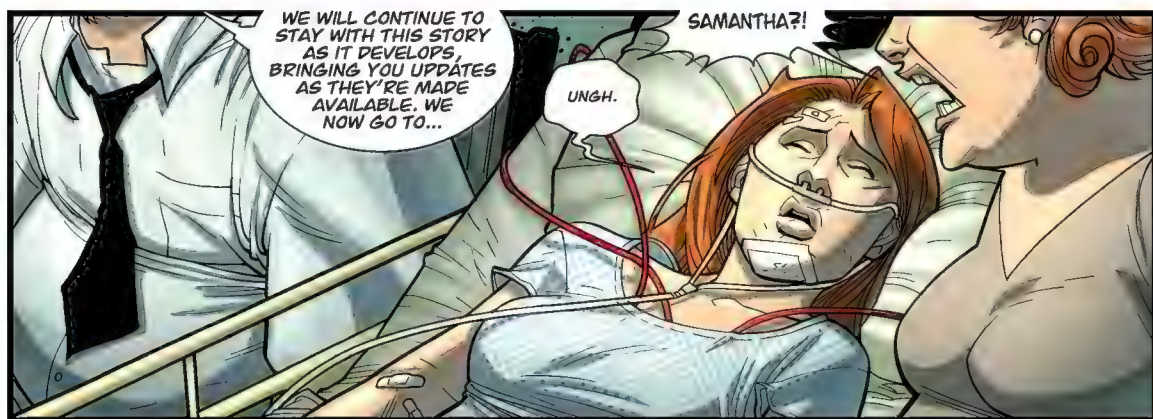
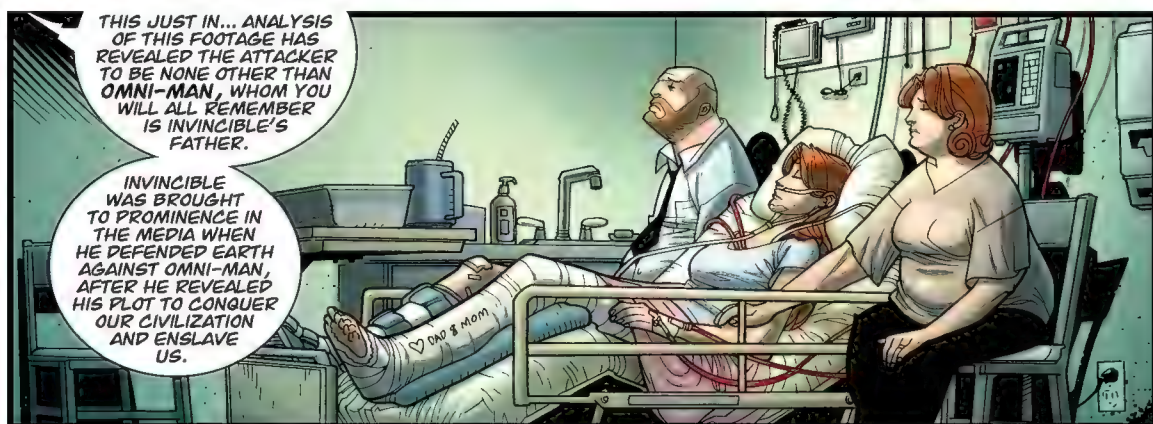
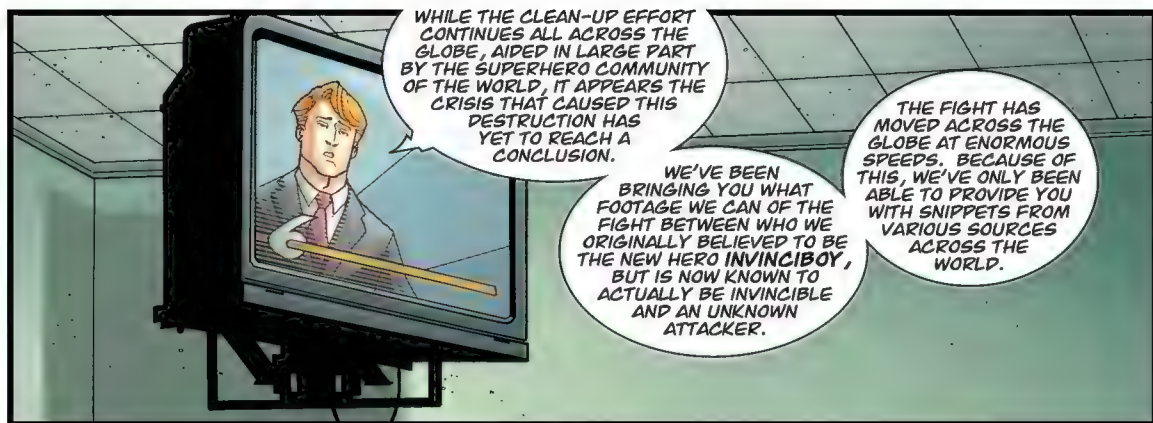
THERE'S SIMPLY NOTHING I CAN DO TO SPEED THINGS ALONG.

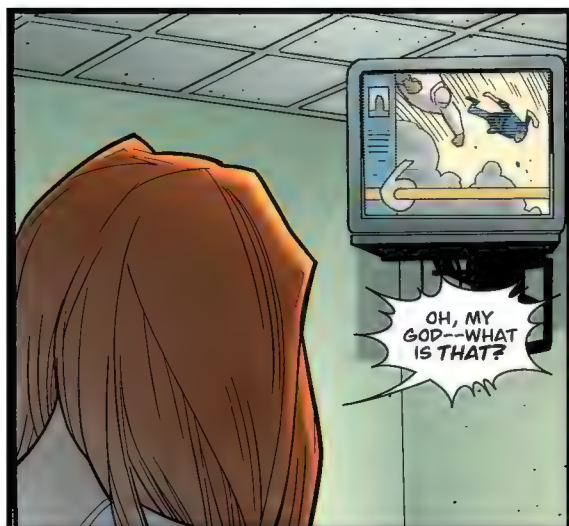
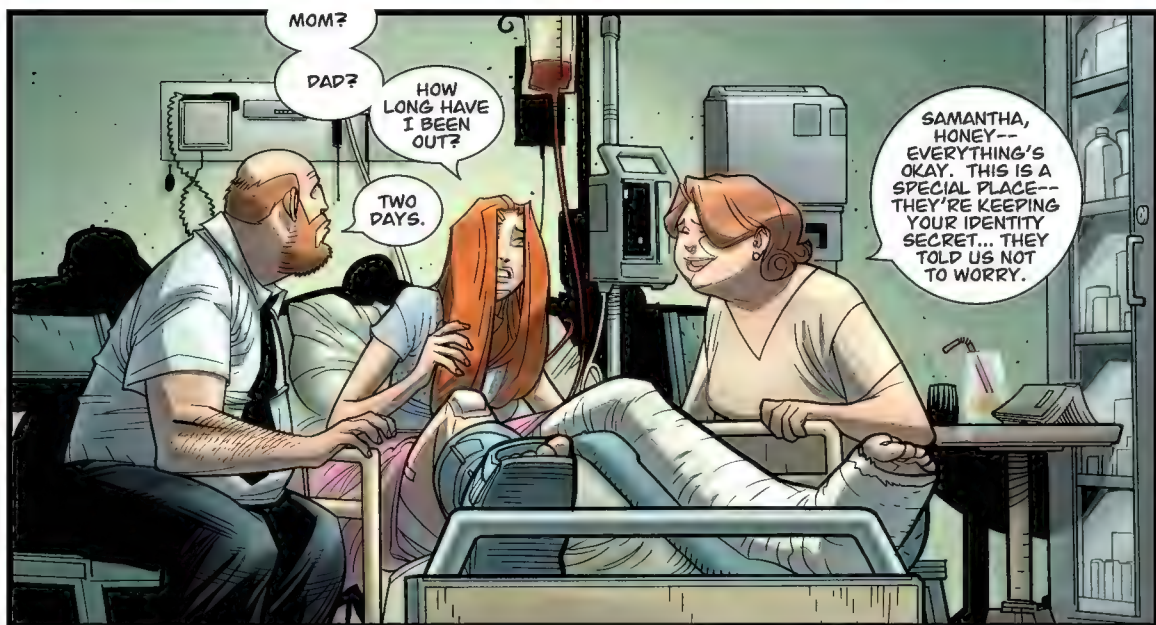
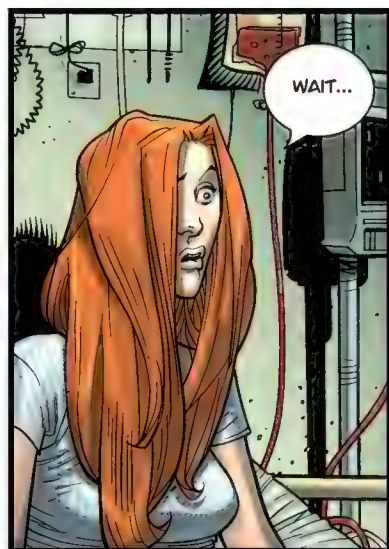
THEN GOD HELP US ALL...

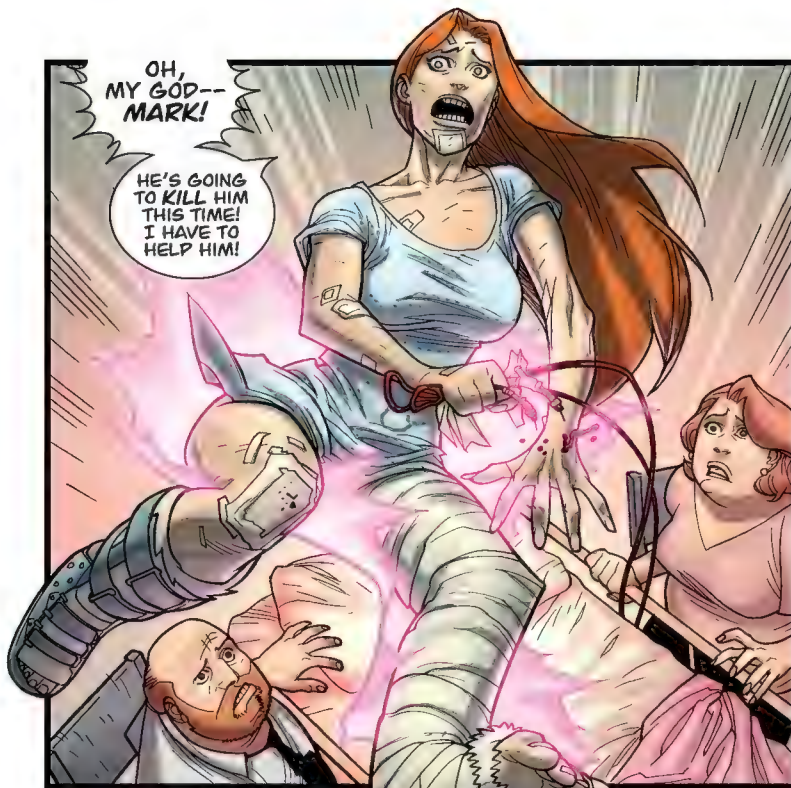


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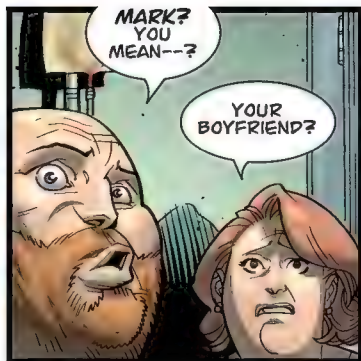






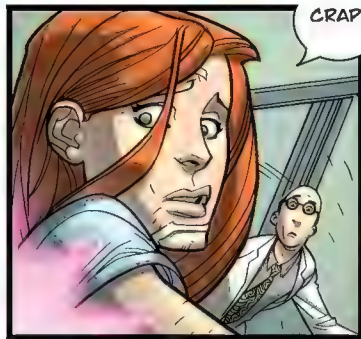
OH,
MY GOD--
MARK!

HE'S GOING
TO KILL HIM
THIS TIME!
I HAVE TO
HELP HIM!



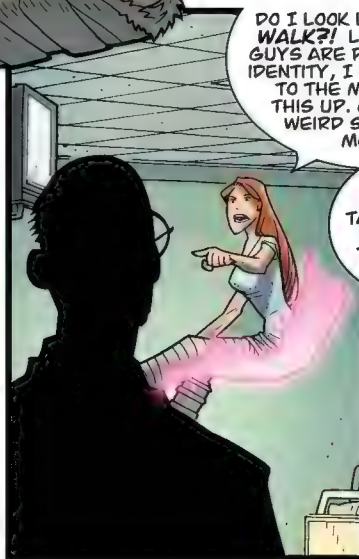
MARK?
YOU
MEAN--?

YOUR
BOYFRIEND?



CRAP.

YOU CAN'T BE DOING THIS--
YOUR INJURIES, YOU COULD
MAKE THEM WORSE. THERE
ARE TESTS--YOU CAN'T
EVEN WALK!



DO I LOOK LIKE I NEED TO
WALK?! LISTEN--IF YOU
GUYS ARE PROTECTING MY
IDENTITY, I NEED TO SPEAK
TO THE MAN WHO SET
THIS UP. GRAY HAIR--
WEIRD SCAR ON HIS
MOUTH.

YOU KNOW
WHO I'M
TALKING ABOUT.
GET HIM ON
THE PHONE--
NOW!

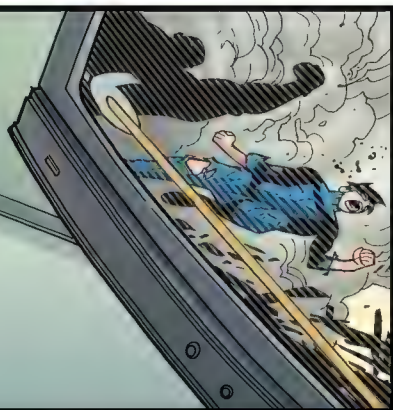


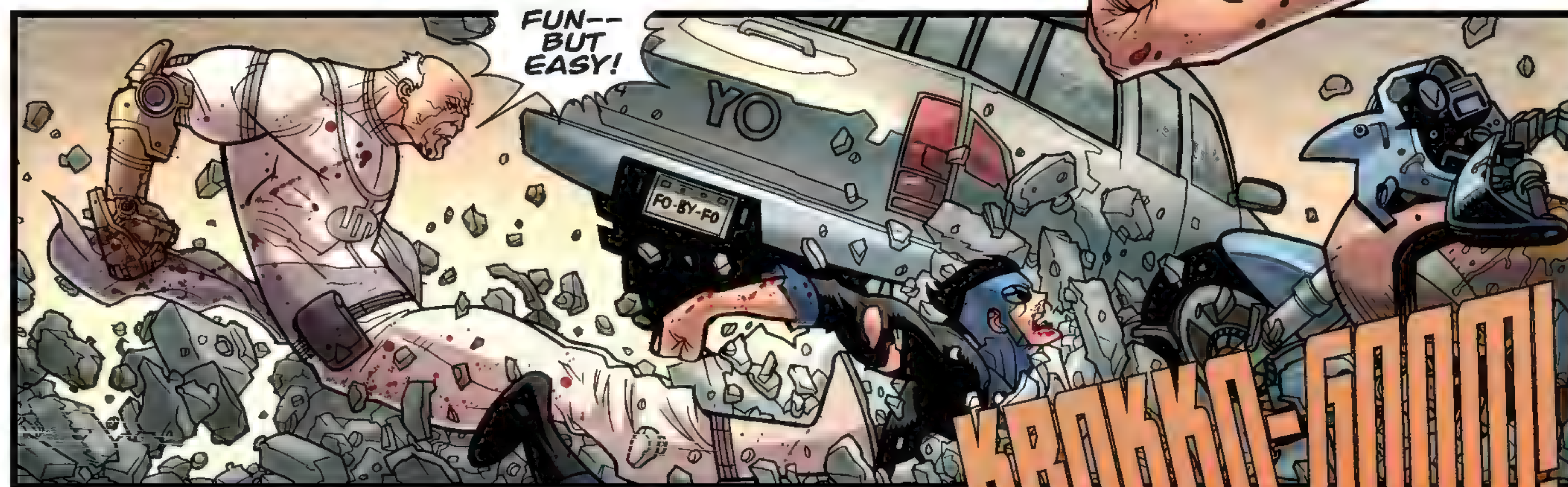
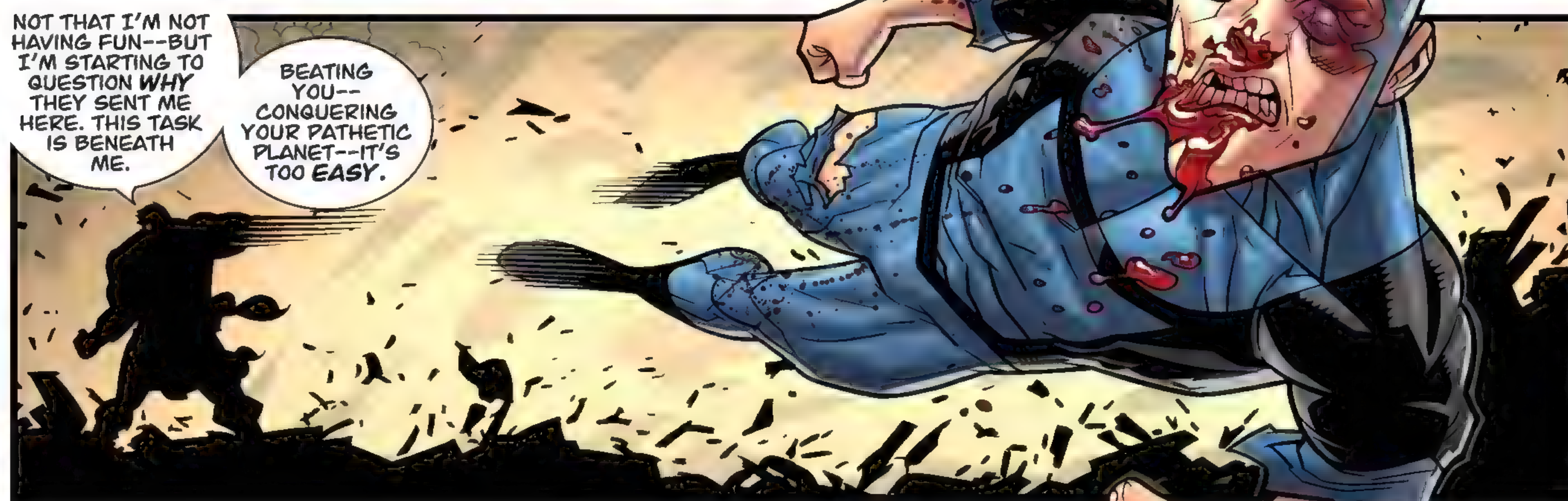
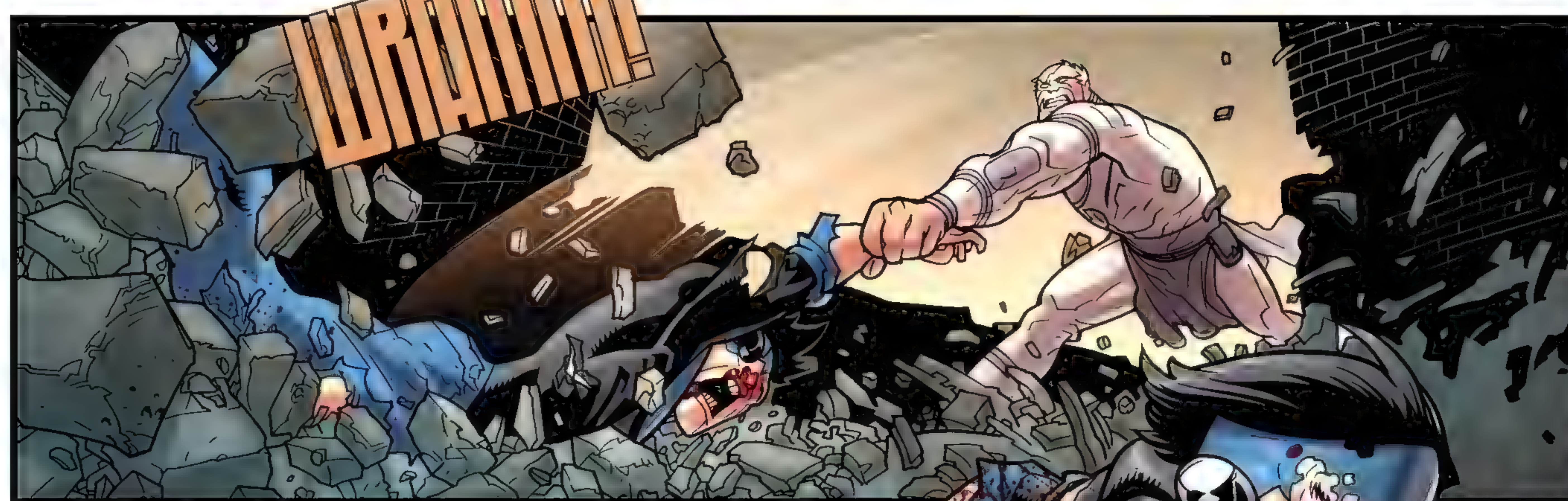
I'LL--

I'LL
SEE WHAT
I CAN
DO.



I'M
COMING,
MARK.







EAT ONE,
YOU OLD
SACK OF
TURDS!

WIRKKKI!



C'MON--
HURRY!

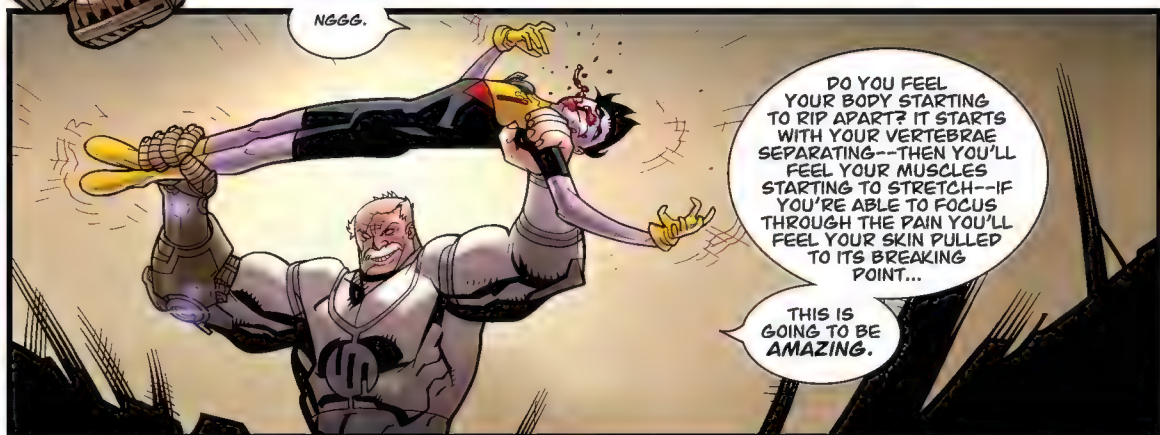
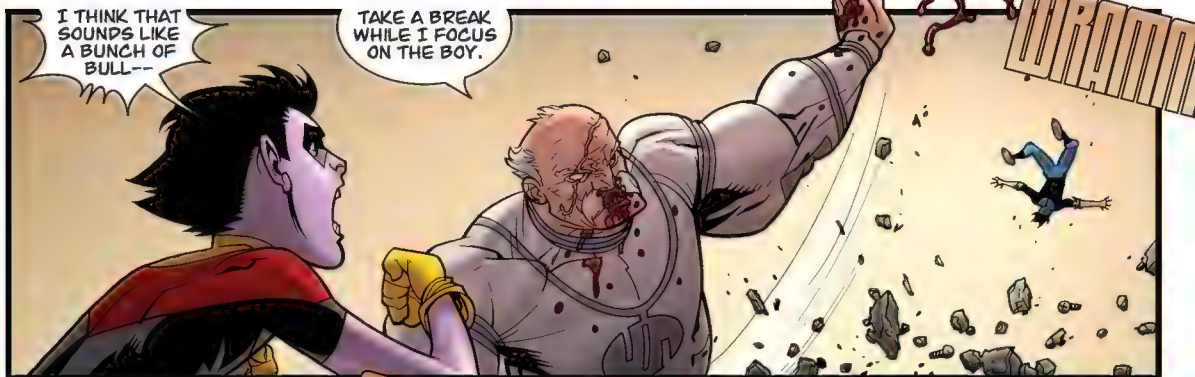
WHY DID
YOU COME BACK?
HE'LL KILL YOU,
OLIVER. PLEASE,
JUST RUN!

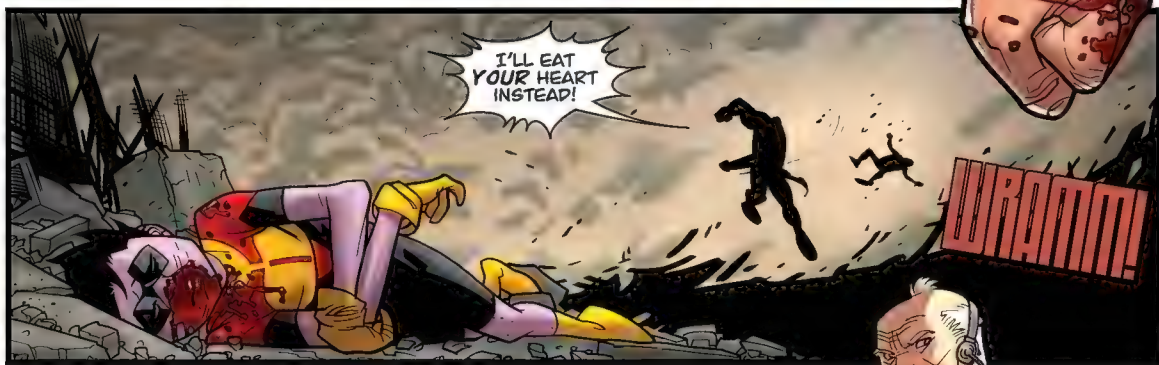
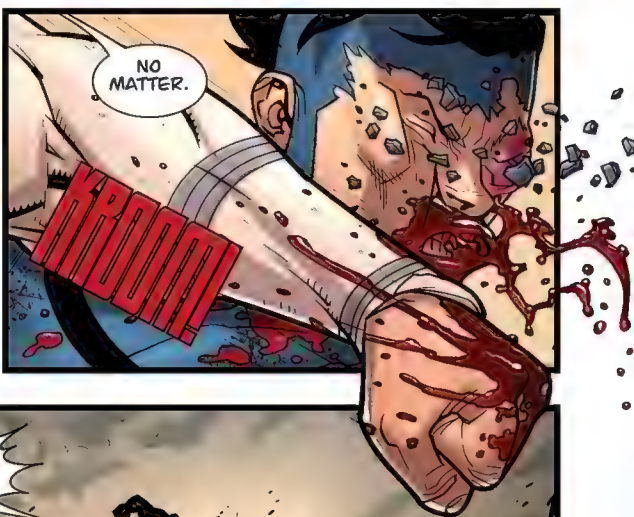
YOU CAN'T
FIGHT HIM
ALONE--HE'S
OLD AS DIRT--
WE CAN TAKE
HIM DOWN
TOGETHER.

TRUST ME,
YOU CAN'T.
I'M OLD--
NOT WEAK.

I DO
THANK YOU FOR
COMING BACK.
I WELCOME THE
SECOND CHANCE.

I'M GOING
TO SPLIT YOU
IN HALF AND
EAT YOUR HEART.
HOW'S THAT
SOUND?

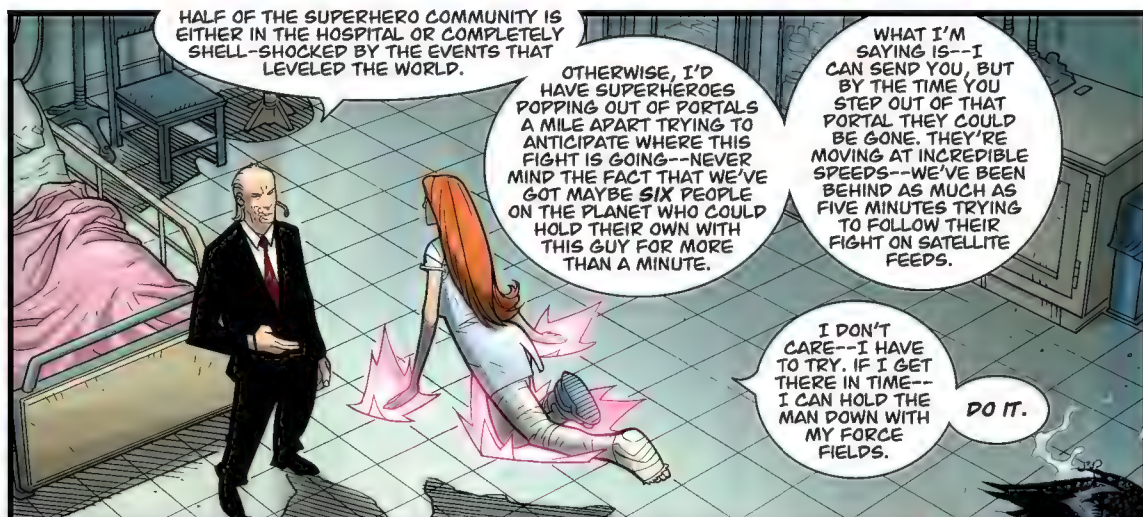
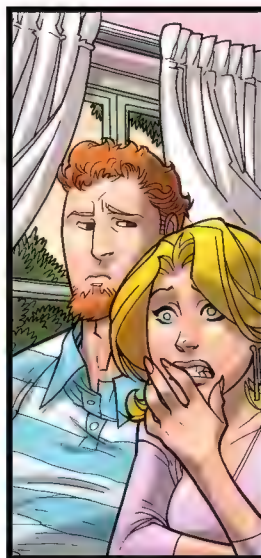






THAT WAS THEM,
THEY SAID HE'S
HURT BUT
BREATHING--THEY
SAY HE'S GOING
TO BE OKAY.

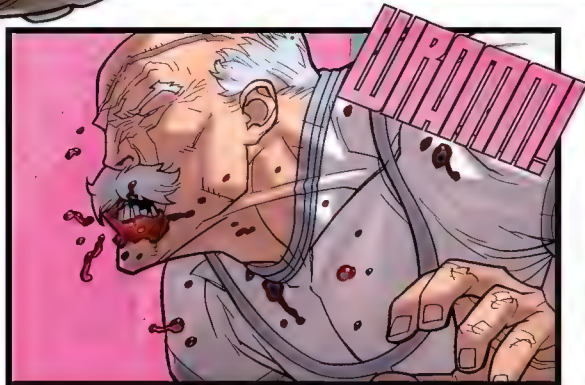
THERE,
THERE...



LOOK
BEHIND
YOU!







MARK!

GET OUT
OF HERE!
GO!

NOW!

WRAAAAAM!

SO CONCERNED
FOR OTHERS'
SAFETY...

YOU
REALLY
ARE
PATHETIC.

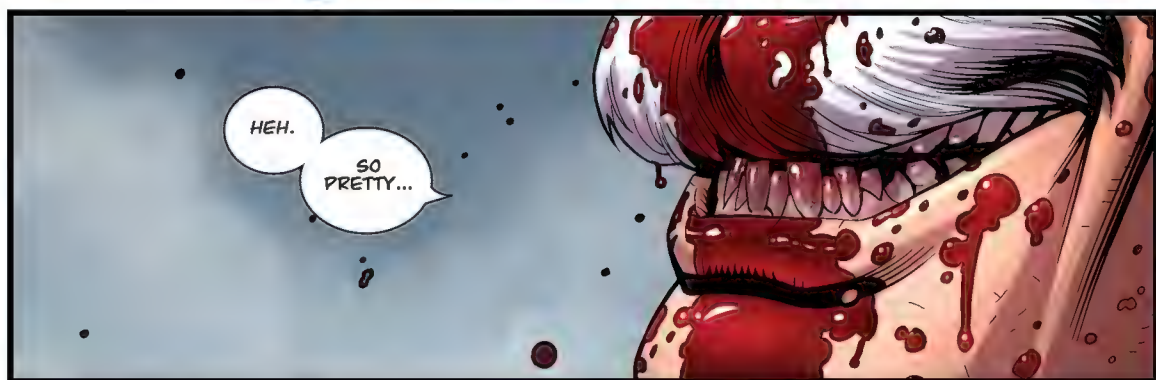
WURUKK!

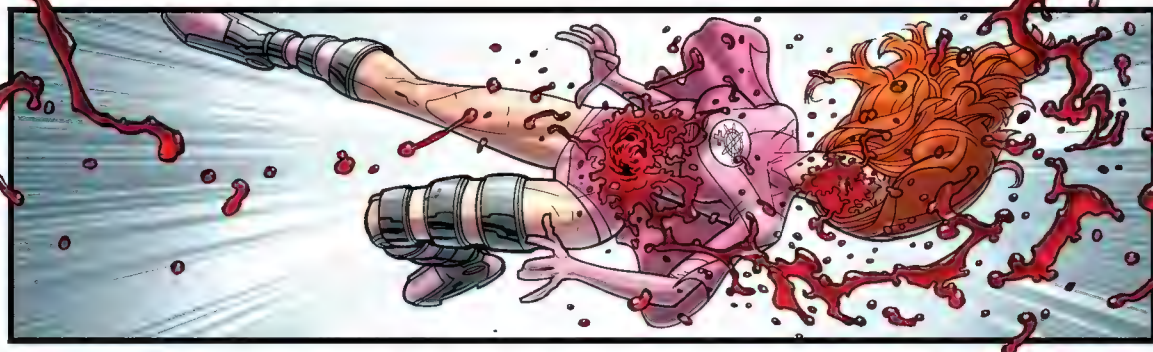
AAAGGH!

NO!

YOU'VE GOT
PROBLEMS
OF YOUR OWN,
KITTEN.

CHOOOM!









--BREATHING.



SHE MUST HAVE REALLY
CARED FOR YOU--TO DO
WHAT SHE DID HERE. SURELY
SHE WASN'T STUPID ENOUGH
TO THINK SHE COULD
ACTUALLY HURT
ME.

SHE MUST
HAVE DONE
ALL THIS
FOR YOU.

SUCH A
STRONG BOND,
WE VILTRUMITES
HAVE NOTHING LIKE
THIS. IT BREEDS
WEAKNESS. STILL,
IT'S ADMIRABLE. I
AM BEGINNING TO
UNDERSTAND
YOUR AFFINITY
FOR THESE
CREATURES.



DELICIOUS.



EVE!

EVE--
DON'T!



NOT
LONG
NOW,
EH?

IF YOU'VE
GOT ANYTHING
IMPORTANT TO
TELL HER--
BETTER GET
IT OFF YOUR
CHEST NOW.



I SHOULD
DO THIS NOW--
DON'T KNOW
WHEN I'LL GET
THE CHANCE
AGAIN.

I WANT
TO THANK
YOU, MARK
GRAYSON...
INVINCIBLE.

REALLY.

FROM
THE
BOTTOM
OF MY
HEART.

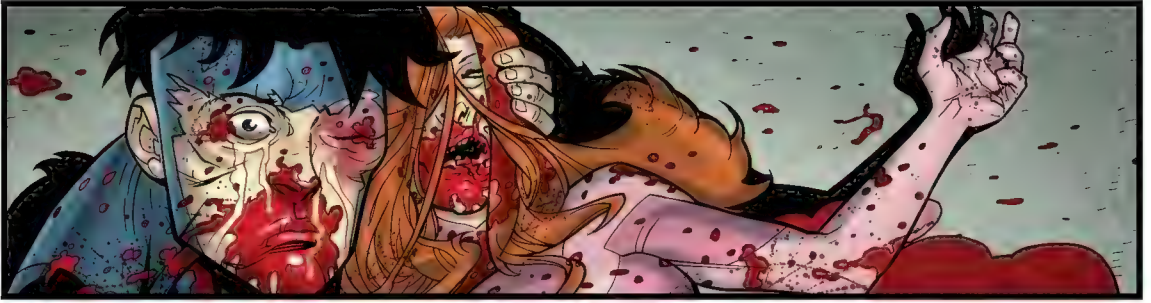
IT'S NOT
VERY OFTEN
THAT I GET TO
CUT LOOSE LIKE
THIS. I MEAN
REALLY CUT LOOSE
LIKE I HAVE HERE.
USUALLY, THERE
ARE SO MANY
MISSION
PARAMETERS.

"DON'T
DESTROY
THIS."

"KEEP
THIS
PERSON
ALIVE."

BUT NOT HERE--
NOT WITH **THIS** PLANET.
FOR WHATEVER REASON,
I DON'T REALLY CARE
WHY, TO BE HONEST, I
WAS TOLD--TAKE CONTROL,
NO MATTER WHAT IT
TAKES... TAKE CONTROL
OF THE PLANET.

SO WHATEVER
YOU DID TO PISS
US OFF--THANK
YOU. THIS HAS
BEEN FUN.





CHAPTER 64





HA HA
HA HA
HA!

AFTER ALL I'VE DONE--
AFTER EVERYTHING
YOU'VE ENDURED AT
MY HAND--STILL,
YOU THREATEN
ME.

I DARE
SAY, CHILD--
YOU ARE
BEGINNING
TO IMPRESS
ME.

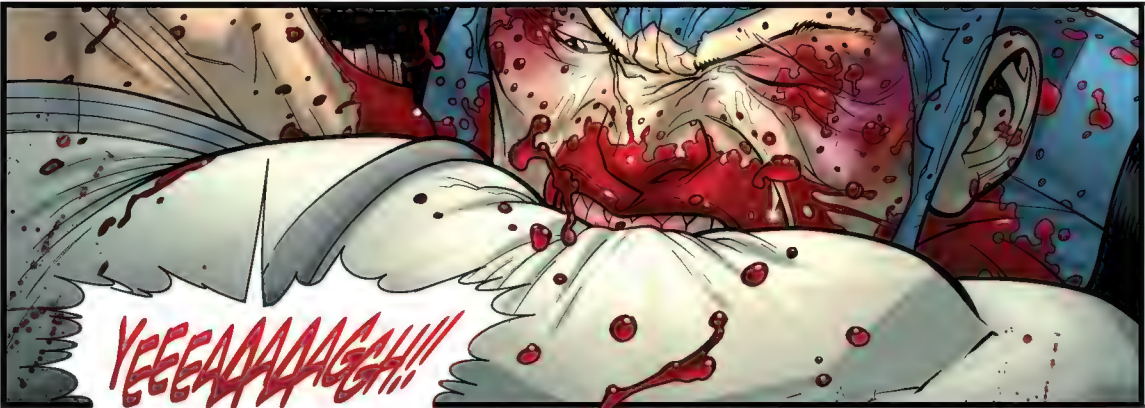
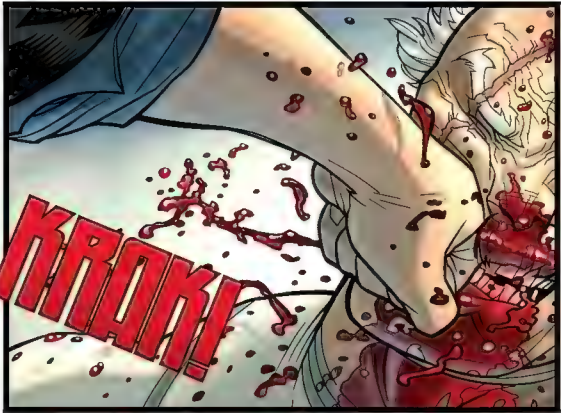
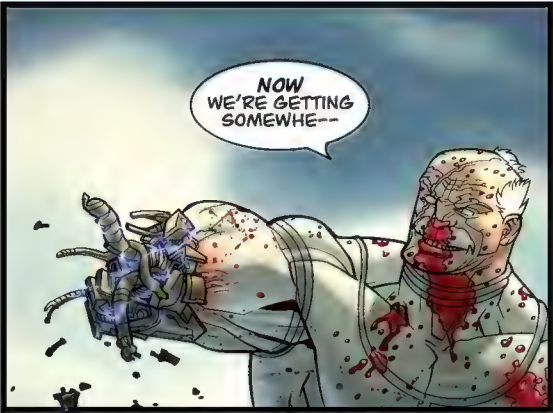


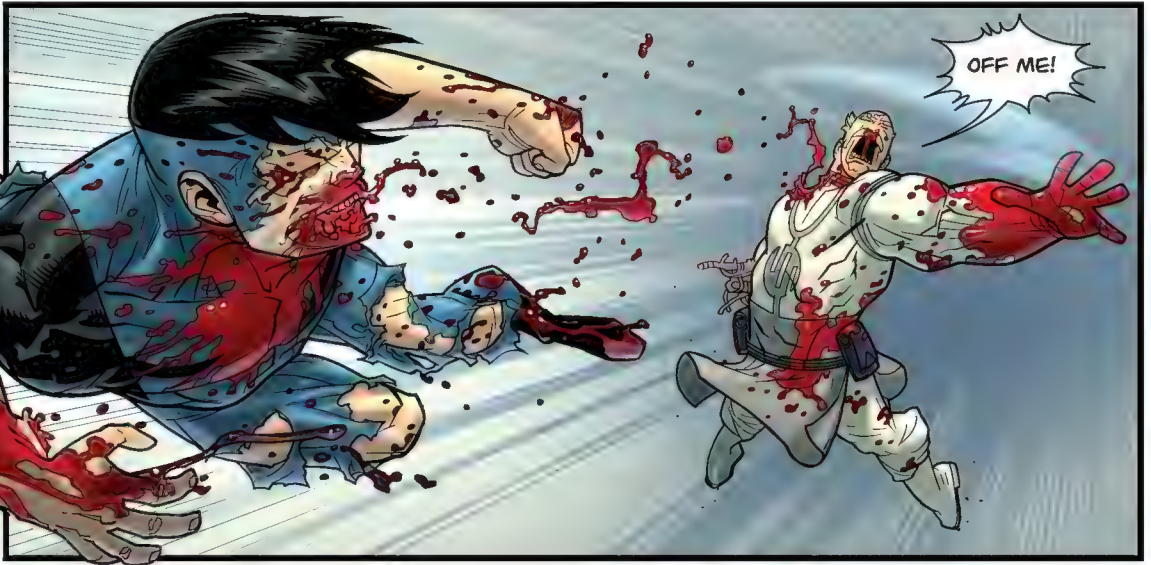
OKAY,
THEN.

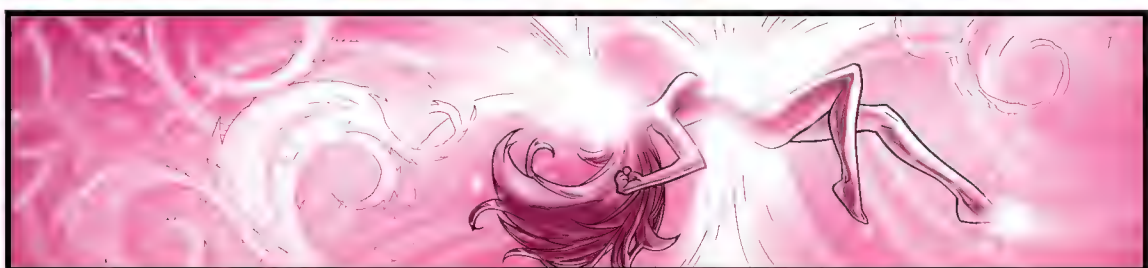
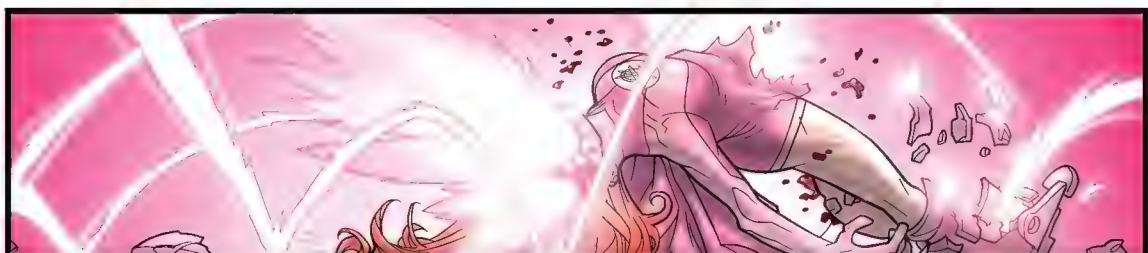
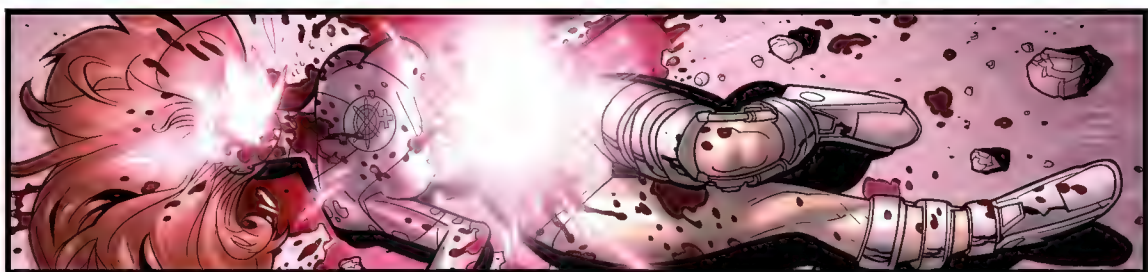
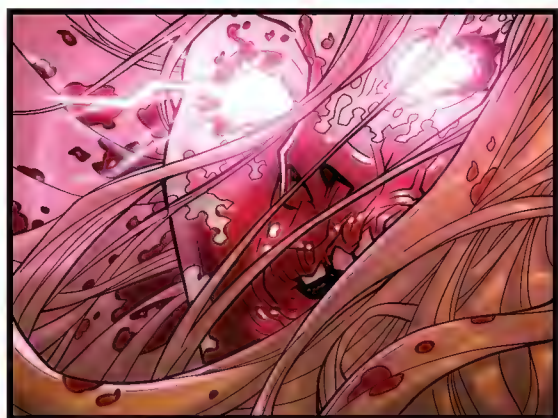
DO YOUR
WORST.

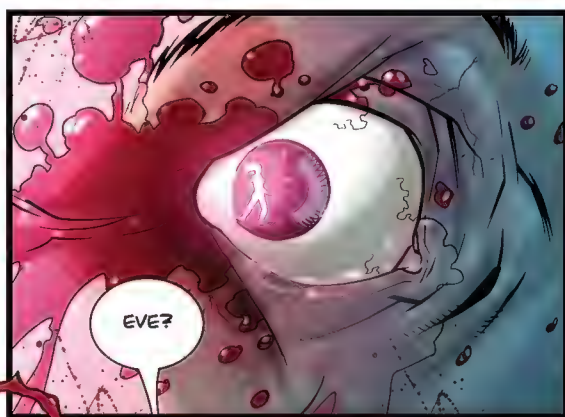
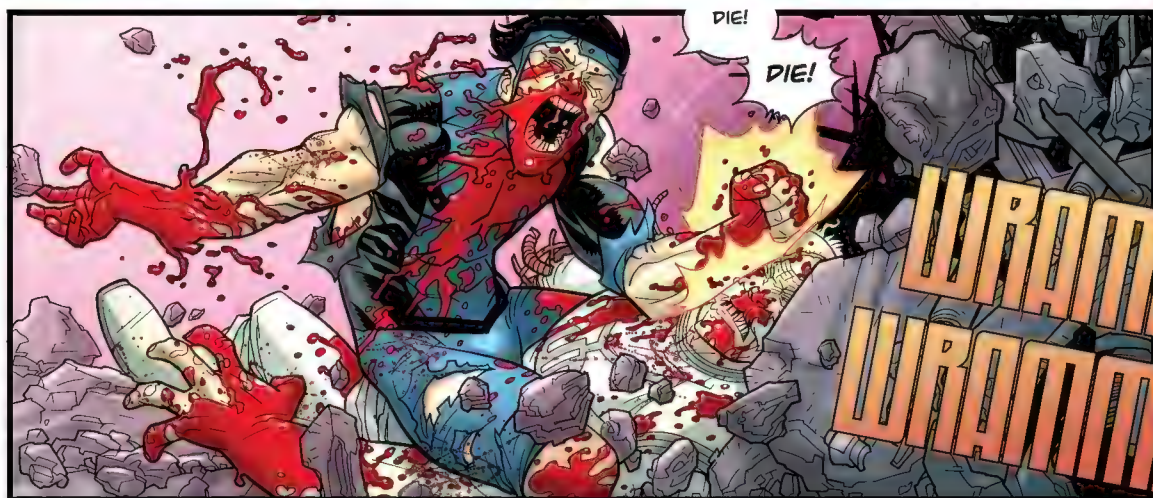




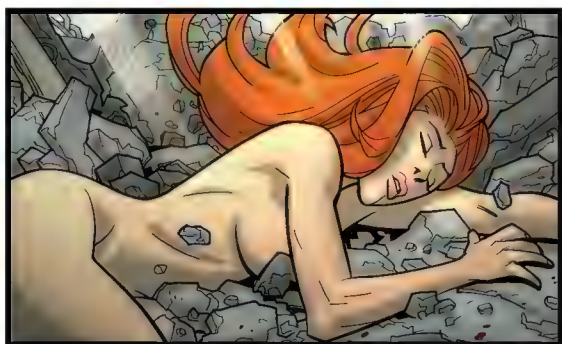
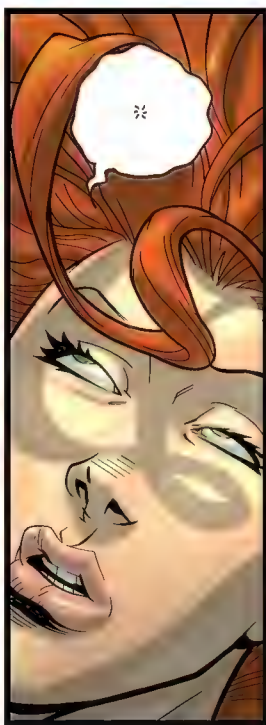
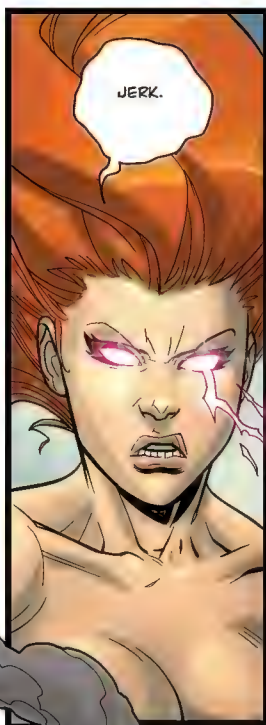


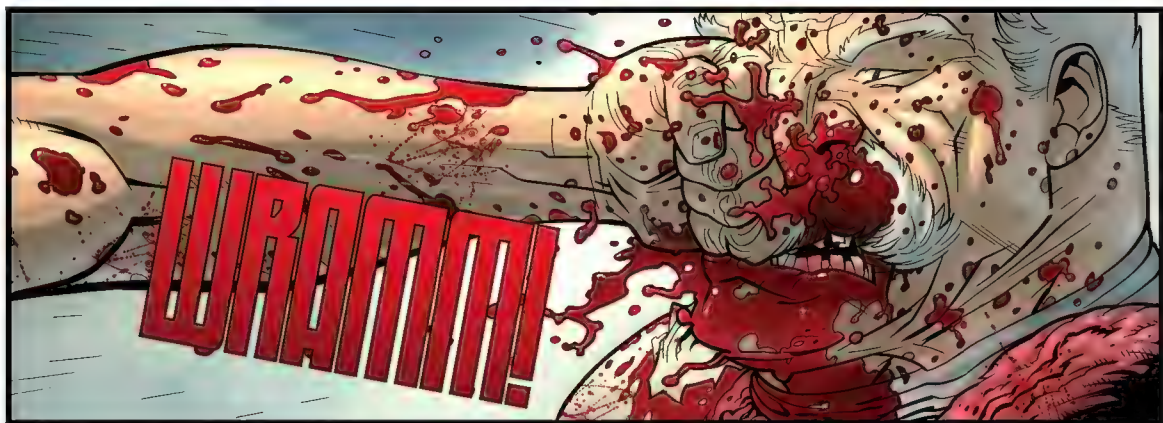


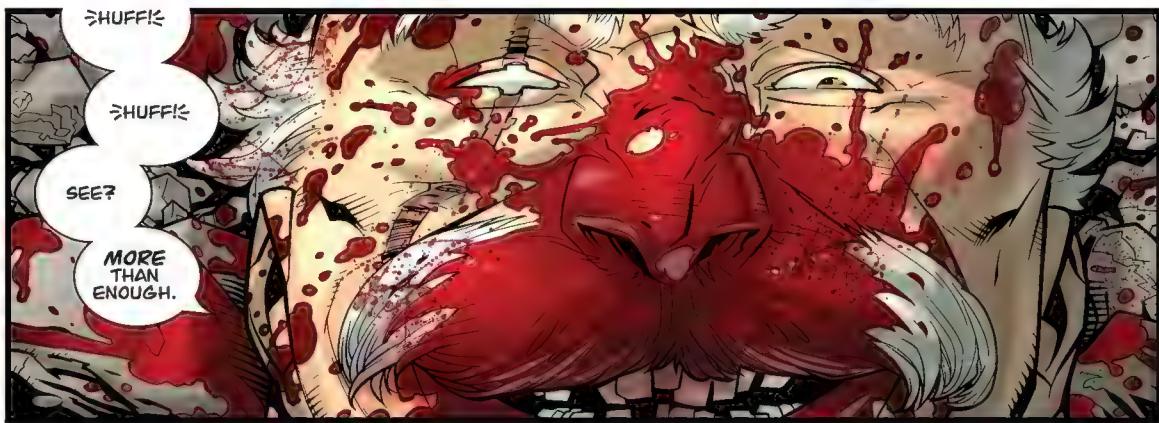


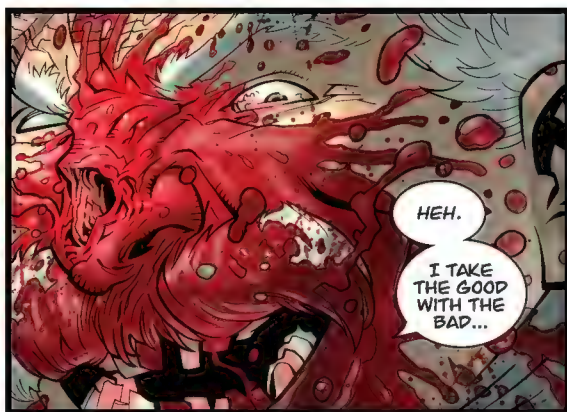
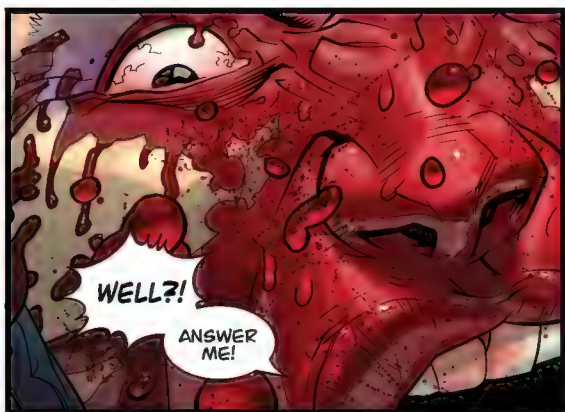




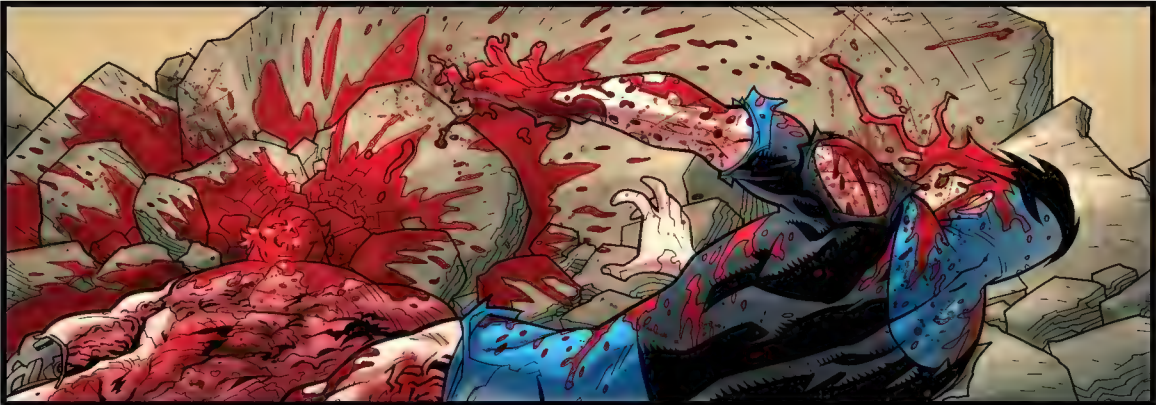
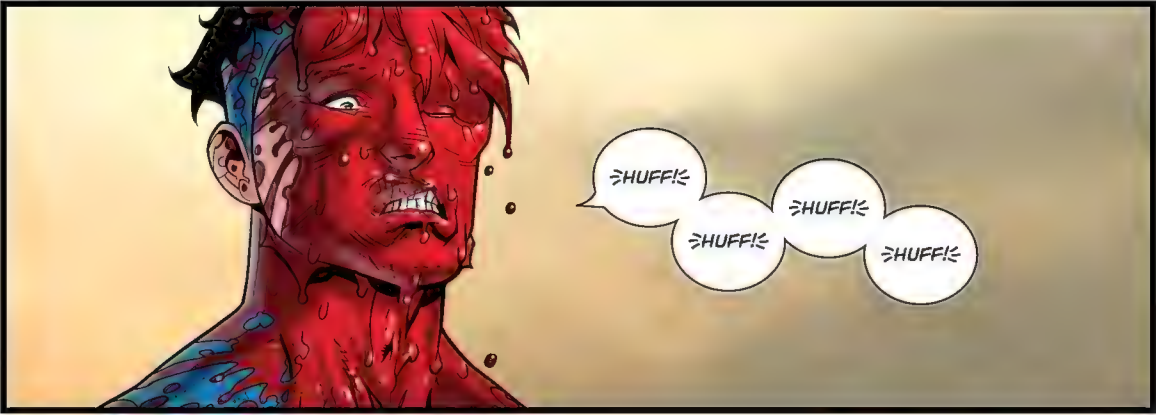


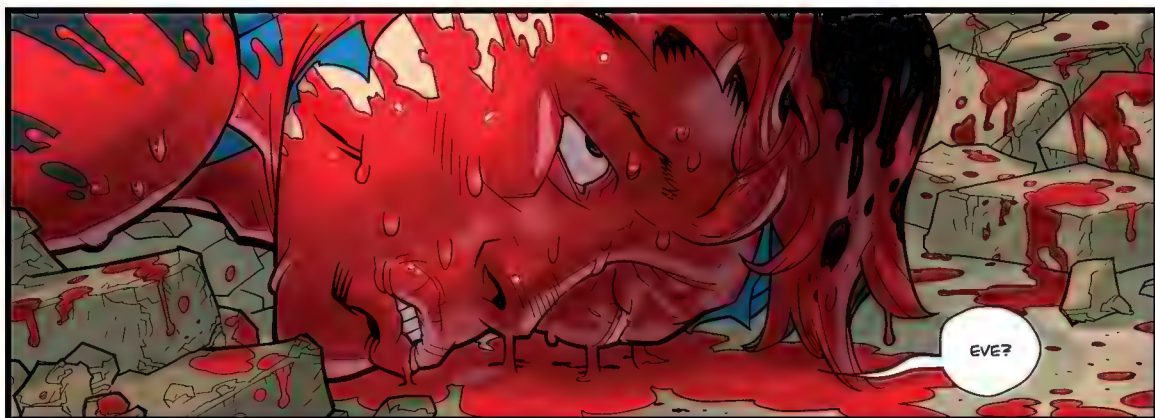








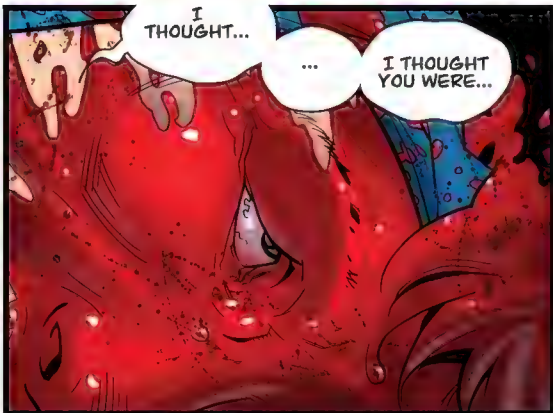
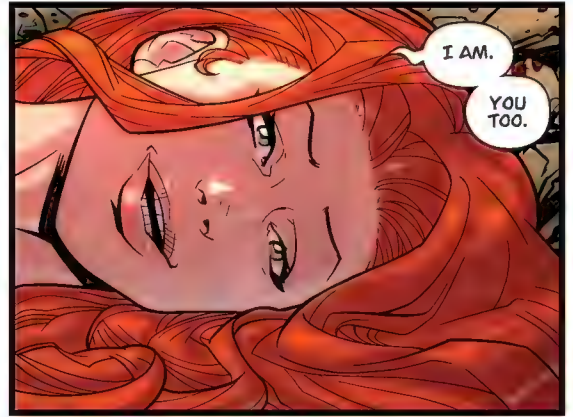
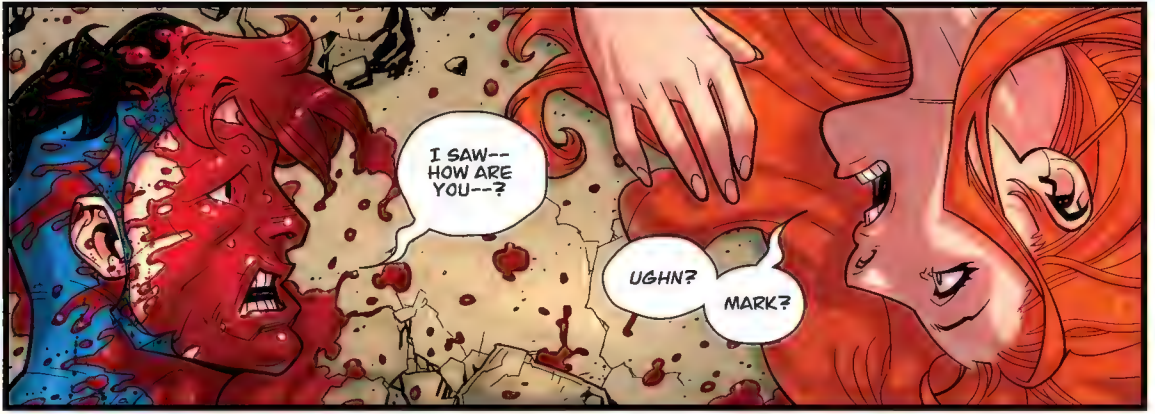


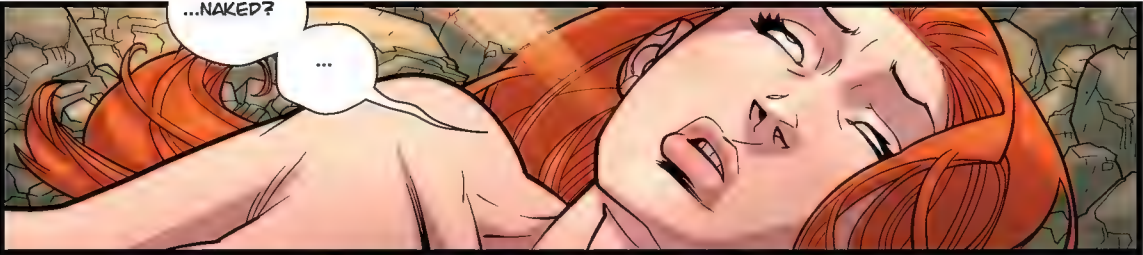




EVE?

HOW?

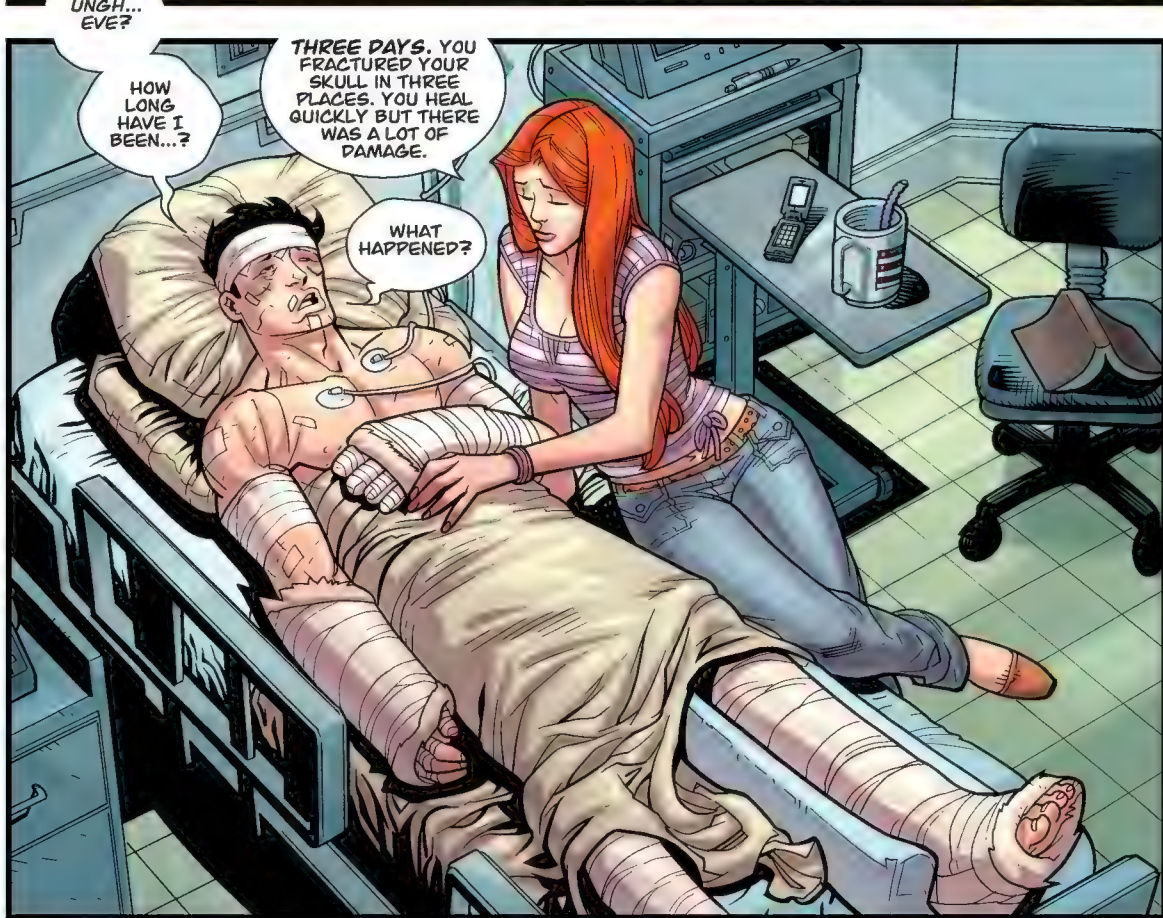
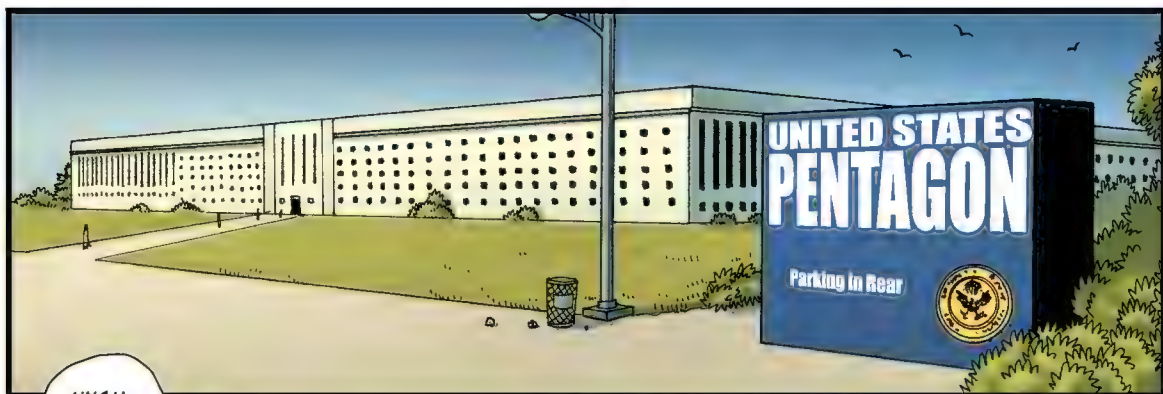






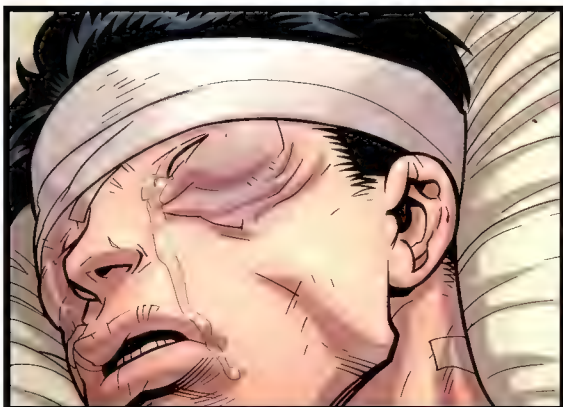
CHAPTER 65







NO... I
REMEMBER
EVERYTHING.

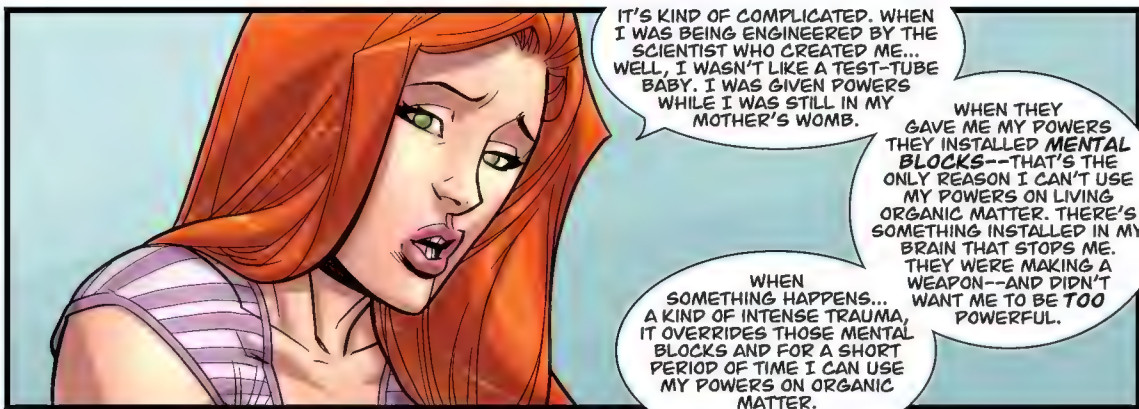


I REMEMBER
YOU... I
REMEMBER
THAT YOU
DIED.

ARE YOU
REALLY
HERE?
ARE YOU
ALIVE?

YES. I'M
ALIVE AND WELL.
I NEVER ACTUALLY
DIED... I JUST
GOT REALLY
CLOSE.

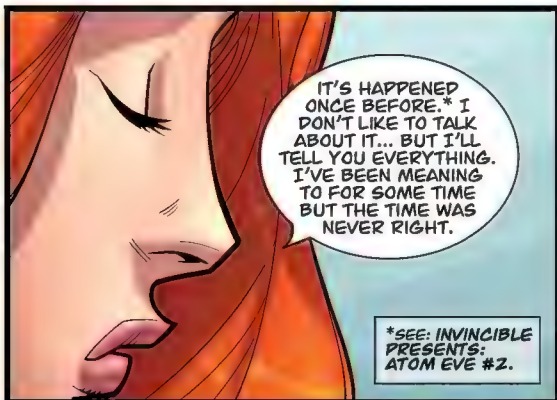
H--
HOW?



IT'S KIND OF COMPLICATED. WHEN
I WAS BEING ENGINEERED BY THE
SCIENTIST WHO CREATED ME...
WELL, I WASN'T LIKE A TEST-TUBE
BABY. I WAS GIVEN POWERS
WHILE I WAS STILL IN MY
MOTHER'S WOMB.

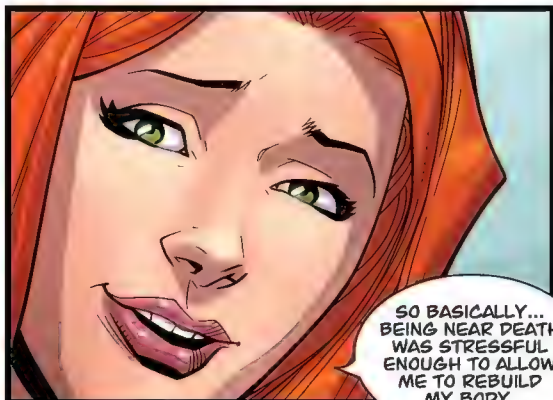
WHEN THEY
GAVE ME MY POWERS
THEY INSTALLED MENTAL
BLOCKS--THAT'S THE
ONLY REASON I CAN'T USE
MY POWERS ON LIVING
ORGANIC MATTER. THERE'S
SOMETHING INSTALLED IN MY
BRAIN THAT STOPS ME.
THEY WERE MAKING A
WEAPON--AND DIDN'T
WANT ME TO BE TOO
POWERFUL.

WHEN
SOMETHING HAPPENS...
A KIND OF INTENSE TRAUMA,
IT OVERRIDES THOSE MENTAL
BLOCKS AND FOR A SHORT
PERIOD OF TIME I CAN USE
MY POWERS ON ORGANIC
MATTER.

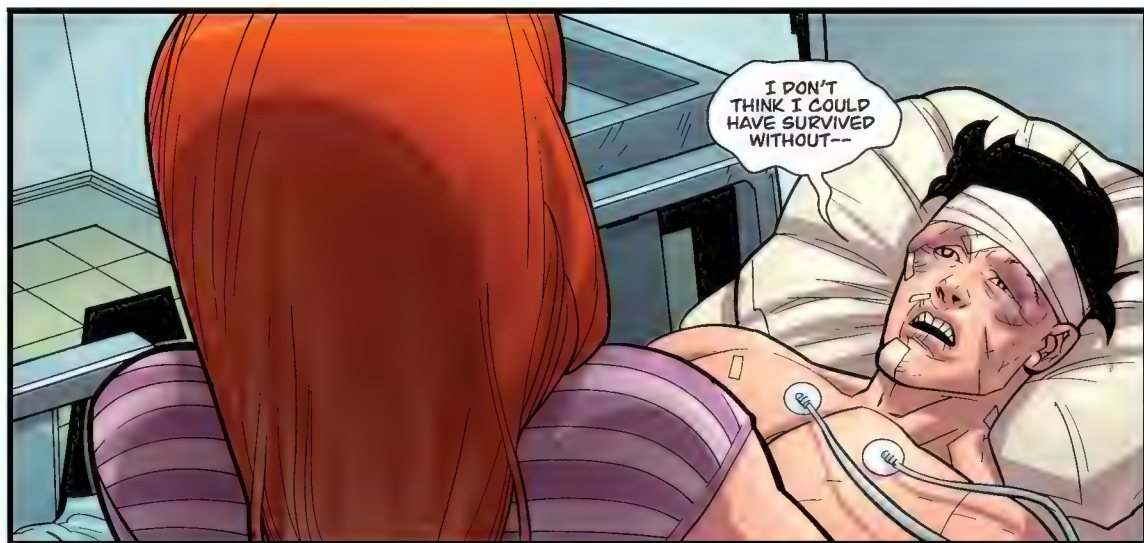
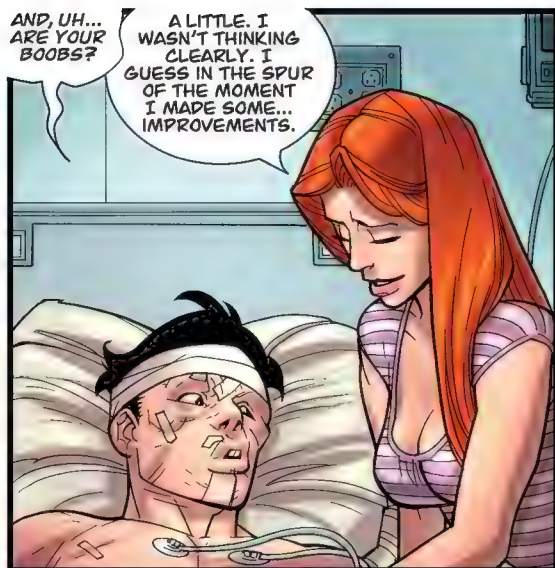


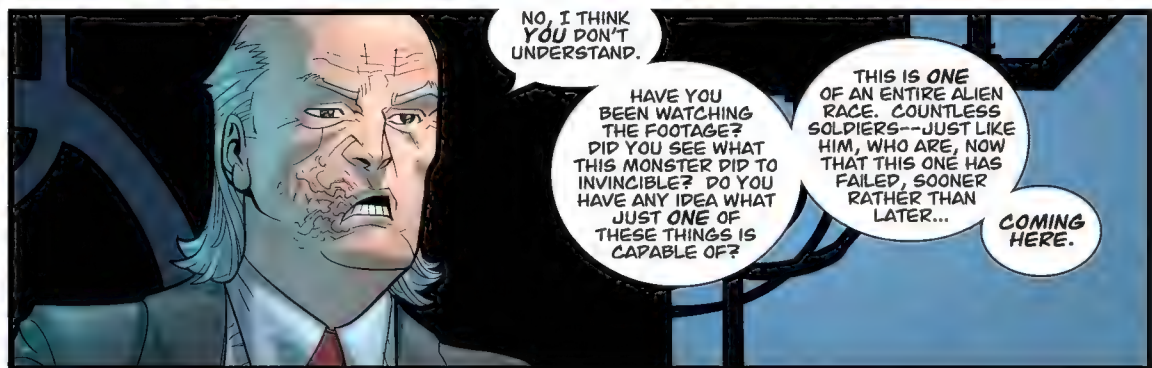
IT'S HAPPENED
ONCE BEFORE.* I
DON'T LIKE TO TALK
ABOUT IT... BUT I'LL
TELL YOU EVERYTHING.
I'VE BEEN MEANING
TO FOR SOME TIME
BUT THE TIME WAS
NEVER RIGHT.

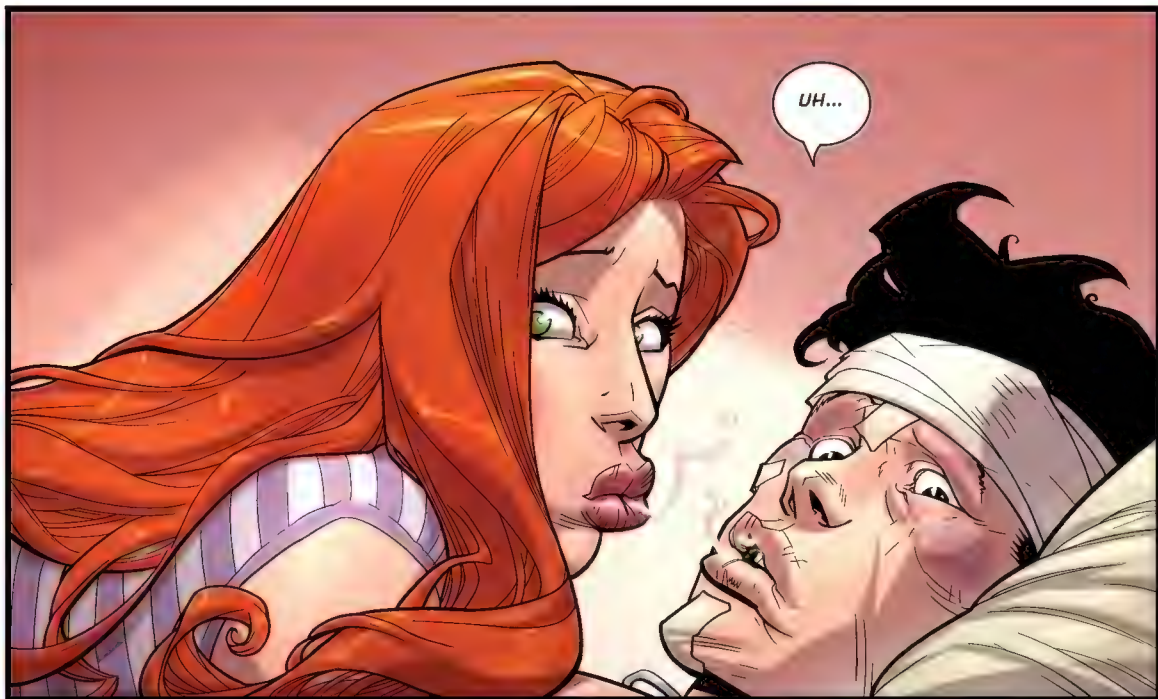
*SEE: INVINCIBLE
PRESENTS:
ATOM EVE #2.



SO BASICALLY...
BEING NEAR DEATH
WAS STRESSFUL
ENOUGH TO ALLOW
ME TO REBUILD
MY BODY.

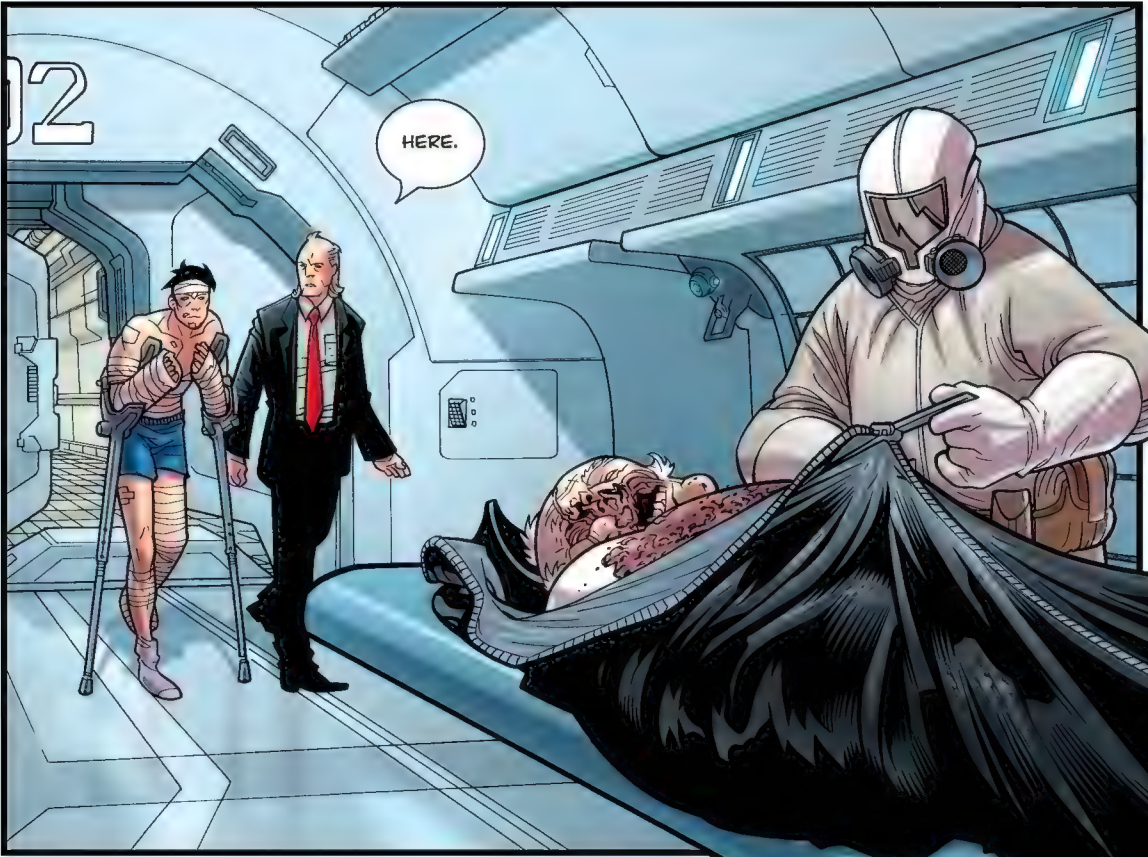


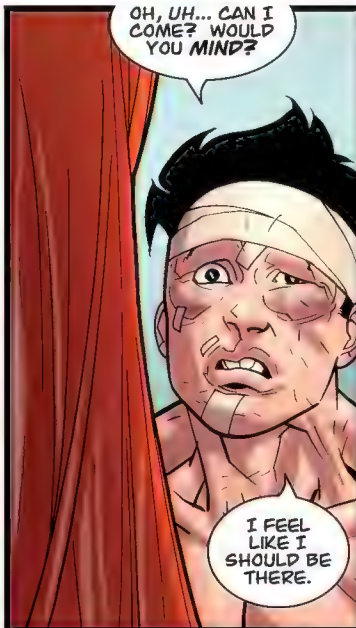
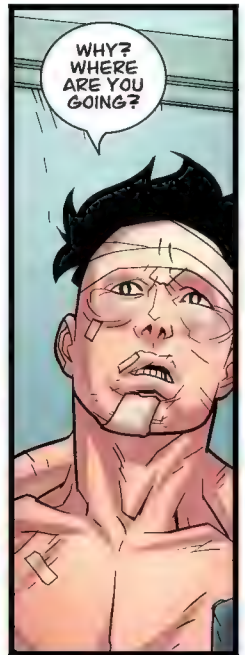
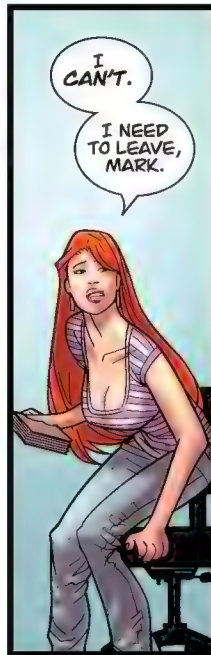
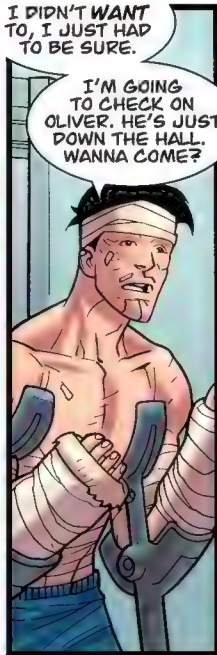
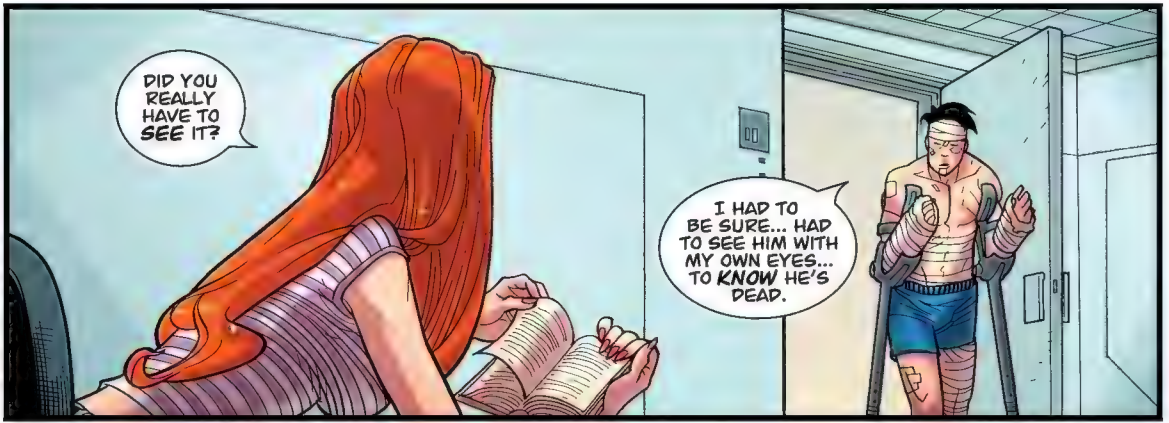














...WE DIDN'T GET ALONG AT FIRST. HE WAS ALWAYS PUSHING MY BUTTONS.

HUH.

BUTTONS... ROBOT... HE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT WAS FUNNY. I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I DIDN'T LIKE HIM AT FIRST, THE TRUTH IS, I IDOLIZED HIM. HE WAS ALWAYS SO CONFIDENT, SO SURE OF HIMSELF AT ALL TIMES.

AND NOW HE'S GONE. I WILL MISS HIM MORE THAN I CAN EVER SAY.

HE WAS EVERYTHING I WANTED TO BE...

I'VE LIVED MOST OF MY LIFE THROUGH DRONES LIKE THE ONE YOU SEE BEFORE YOU NOW. I HAVE ALWAYS SIMPLY BEEN "ROBOT." I HAVE NEVER BEEN COMFORTABLE USING MY GIVEN NAME-- IT REMINDS ME OF THE DISFIGURED BODY I INHABITED MOST OF MY LIFE... BEFORE I TRANSFERRED MYSELF INTO A CLONED BODY OF MY OLDEST FRIEND.

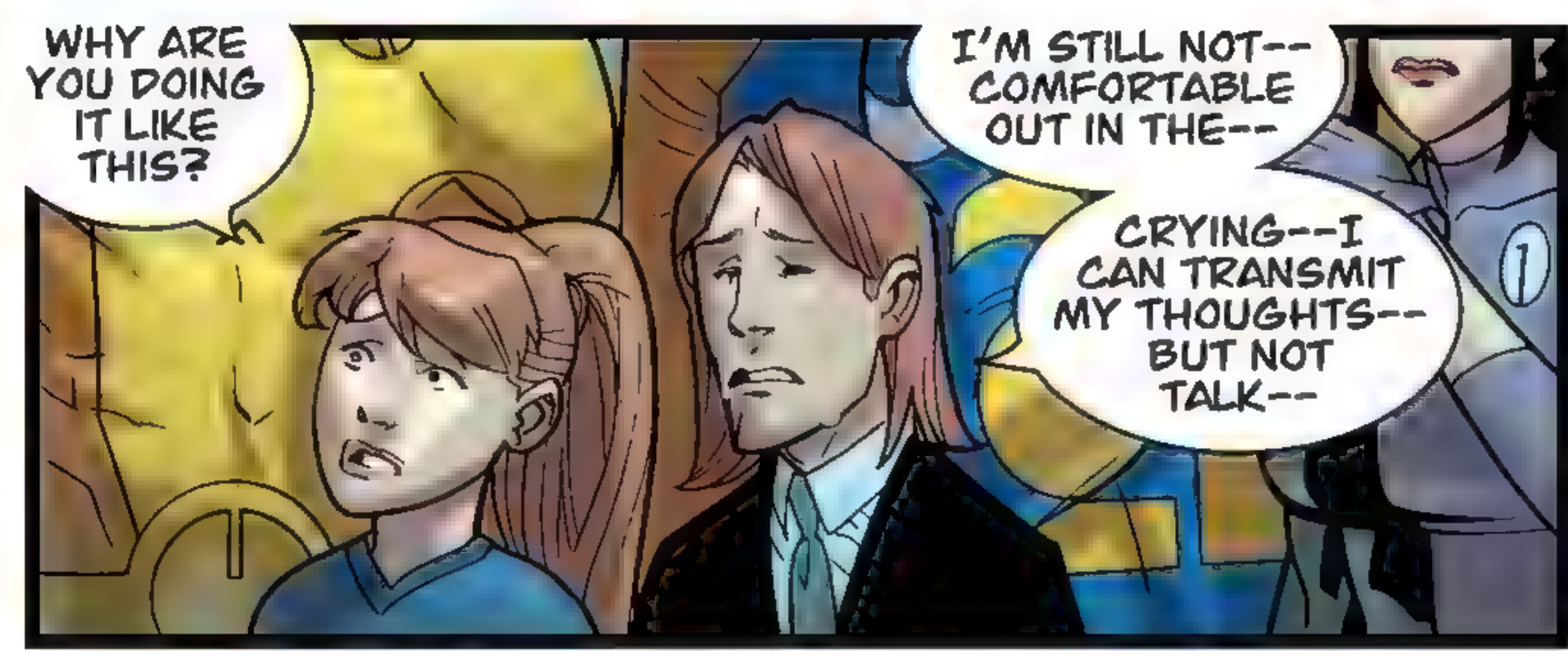
IN HONOR OF THIS FALLEN HERO, I'VE DECIDED THAT I WILL TAKE HIS NAME. I AM CHANGING MY NAME TO "REX." THAT MUCH OF HIM, AT LEAST, WILL LIVE ON.

HE WILL BE MISSED.

I ONLY HOPE THAT I CAN LIVE UP TO HIS SACRIFICE. HE DIED AS HE LIVED--SAVING LIVES.



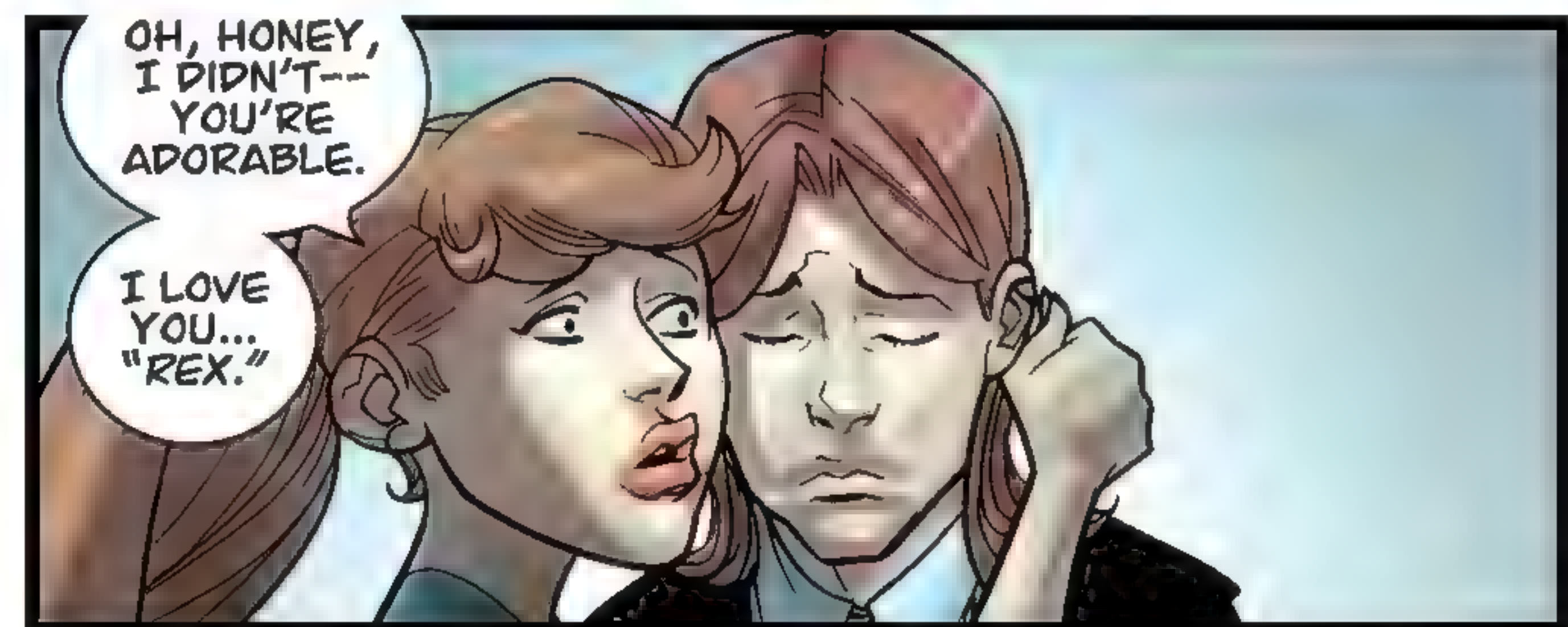
NOW I BELIEVE ATOM EVE WANTED TO SAY A FEW WORDS.



WHY ARE YOU DOING IT LIKE THIS?

I'M STILL NOT-- COMFORTABLE OUT IN THE--

CRYING--I CAN TRANSMIT MY THOUGHTS-- BUT NOT TALK--



OH, HONEY, I DIDN'T-- YOU'RE APORABLE.

I LOVE YOU... "REX."

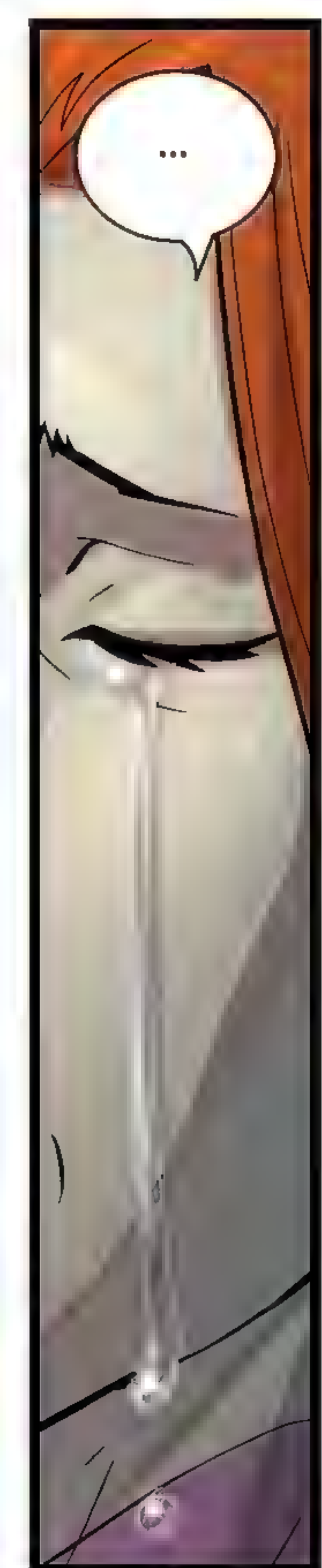


REX SPLODE WAS...

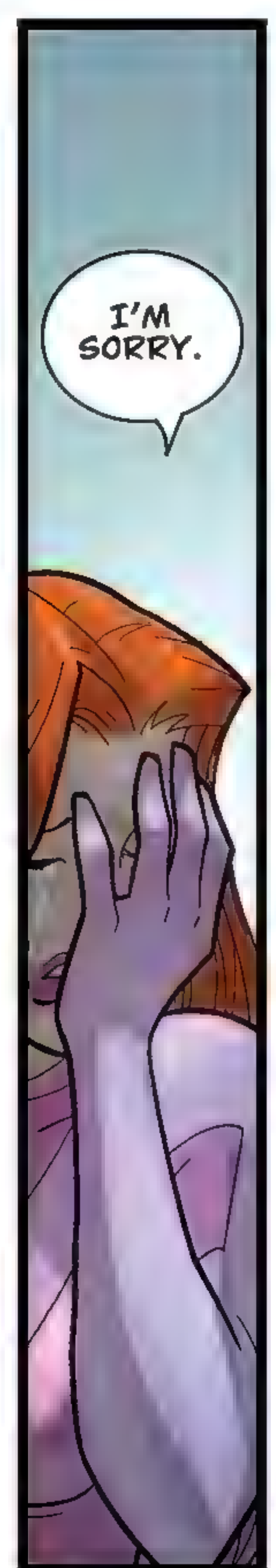
HE WAS MY FIRST... EVERYTHING...



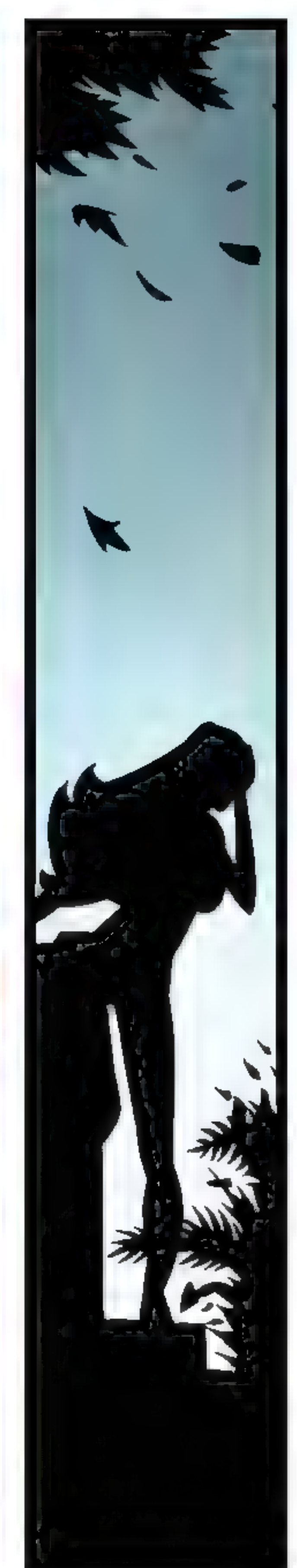
HE WAS...

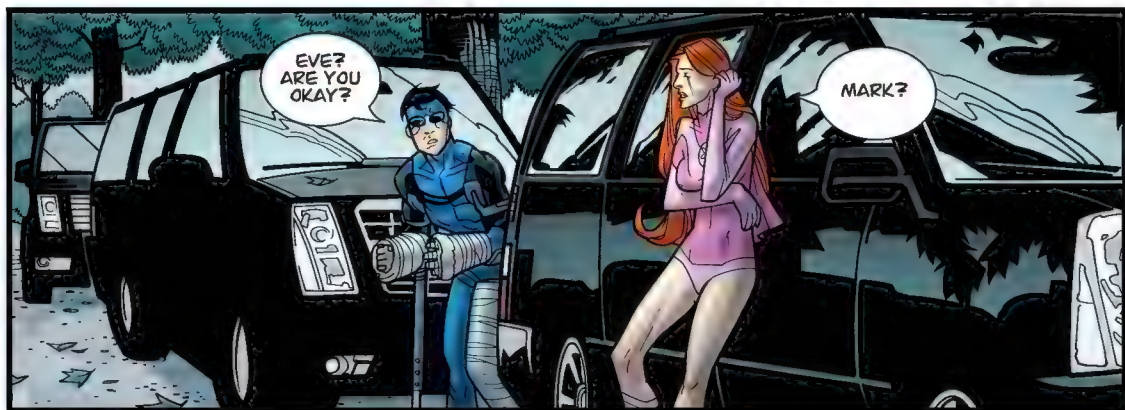


...



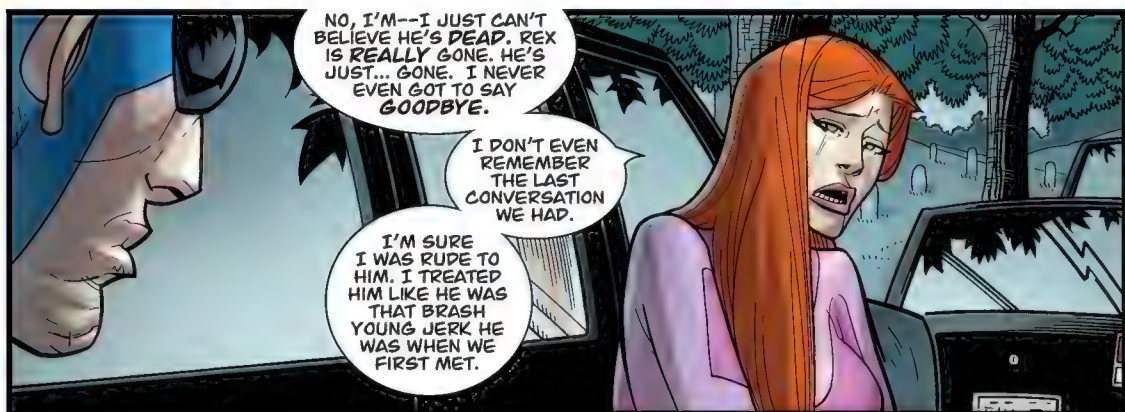
I'M SORRY.





EVE?
ARE YOU
OKAY?

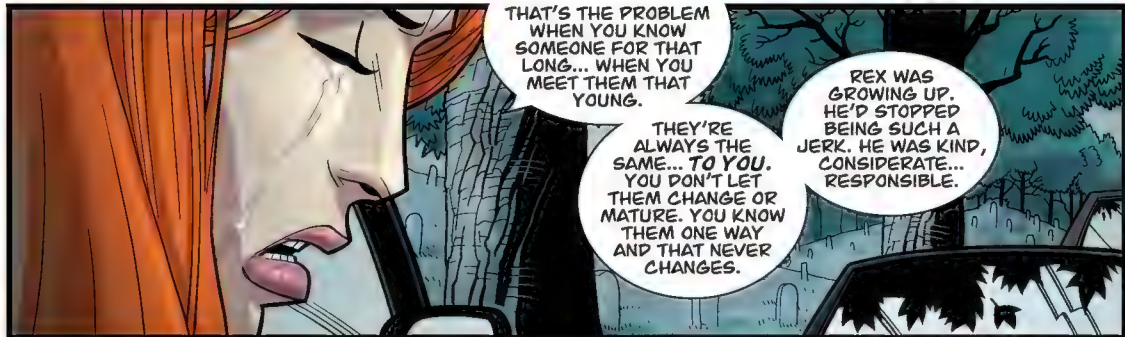
MARK?



NO, I'M--I JUST CAN'T
BELIEVE HE'S DEAD. REX
IS REALLY GONE. HE'S
JUST... GONE. I NEVER
EVEN GOT TO SAY
GOODBYE.

I DON'T EVEN
REMEMBER
THE LAST
CONVERSATION
WE HAD.

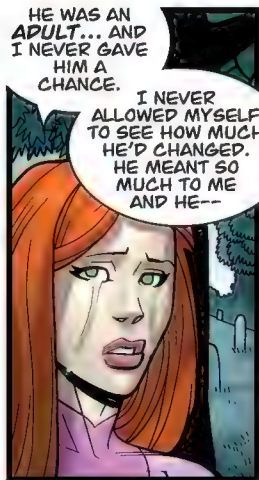
I'M SURE
I WAS RUDE TO
HIM. I TREATED
HIM LIKE HE WAS
THAT BRASH
YOUNG JERK HE
WAS WHEN WE
FIRST MET.



THAT'S THE PROBLEM
WHEN YOU KNOW
SOMEONE FOR THAT
LONG... WHEN YOU
MEET THEM THAT
YOUNG.

THEY'RE
ALWAYS THE
SAME... TO YOU.
YOU DON'T LET
THEM CHANGE OR
MATURE. YOU KNOW
THEM ONE WAY
AND THAT NEVER
CHANGES.

REX WAS
GROWING UP.
HE'D STOPPED
BEING SUCH A
JERK. HE WAS KIND,
CONSIDERATE...
RESPONSIBLE.



HE WAS AN
ADULT... AND
I NEVER GAVE
HIM A
CHANCE.

I NEVER
ALLOWED MYSELF
TO SEE HOW MUCH
HE'D CHANGED.
HE MEANT SO
MUCH TO ME
AND HE--

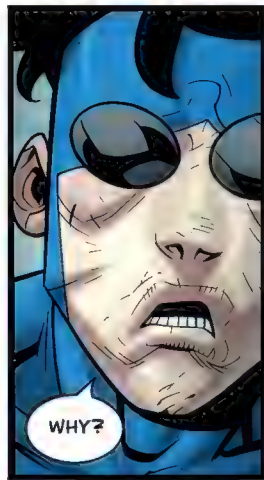


WHAT?
WHAT IS
IT?

I'M SORRY.
I DON'T MEAN
TO TALK ABOUT
HIM LIKE THIS
IN FRONT OF
YOU.



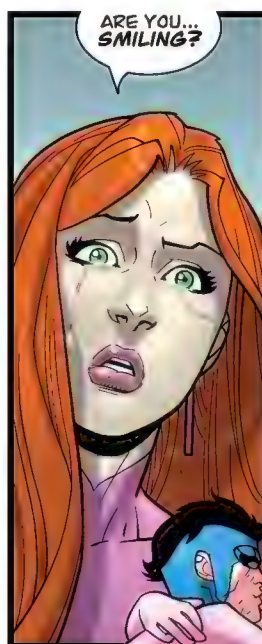
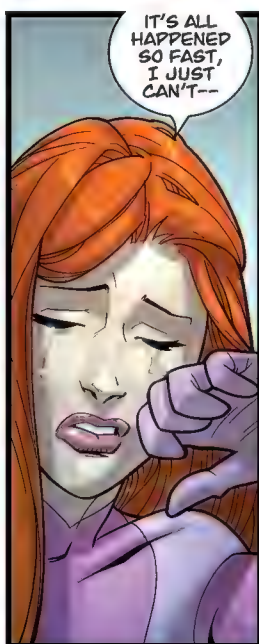
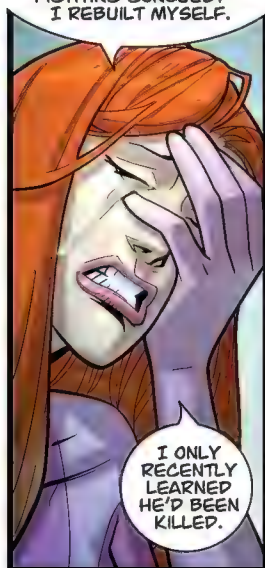
I FEEL
GUILTY BEING
SAD IN FRONT
OF YOU...



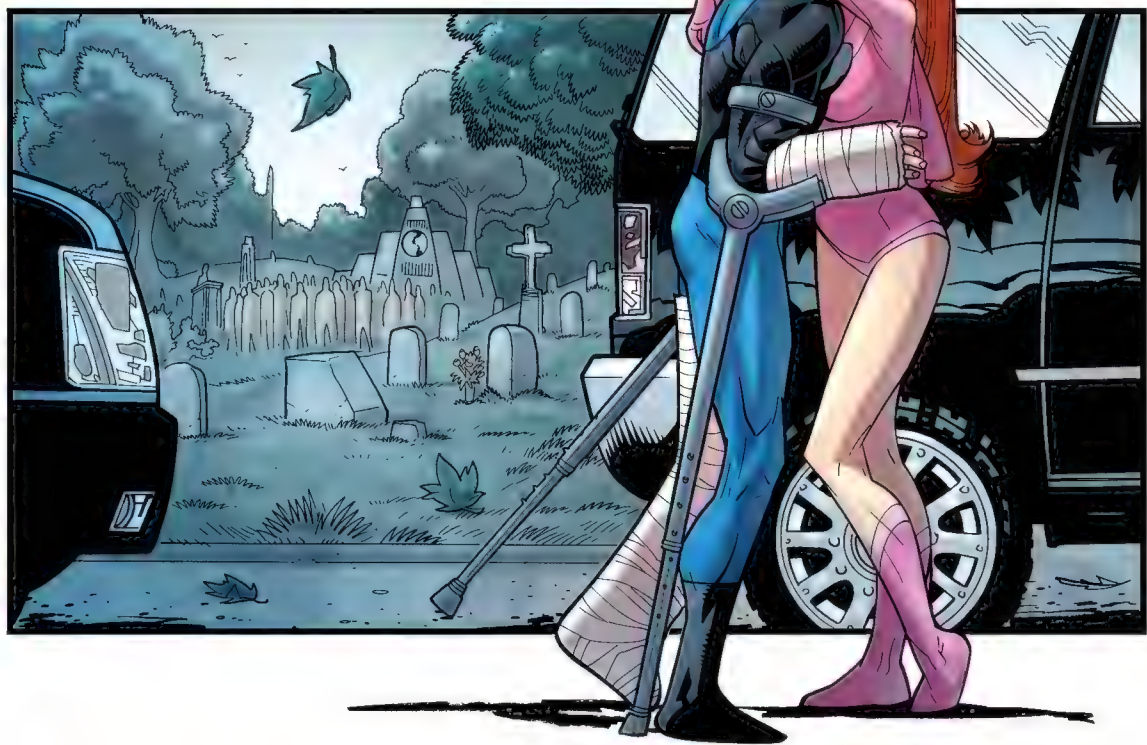
WHY?

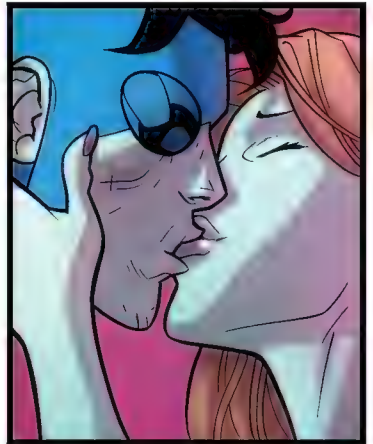
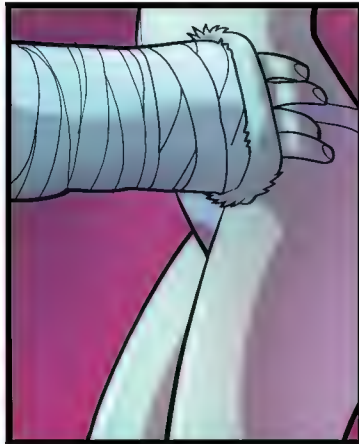
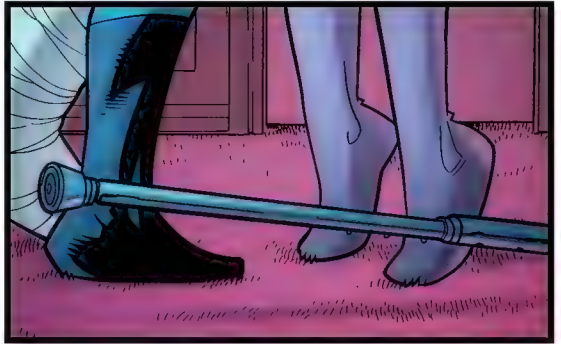
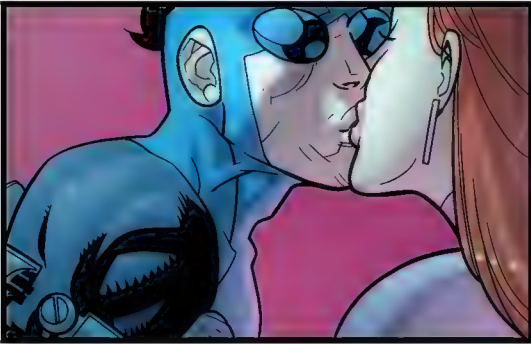
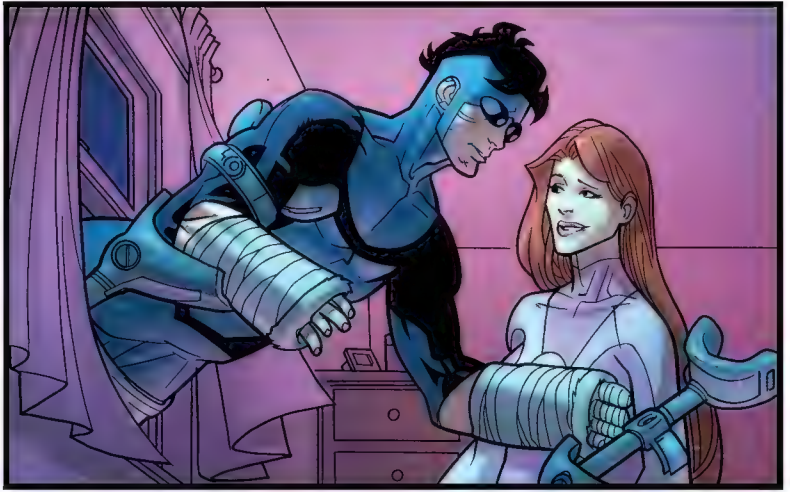


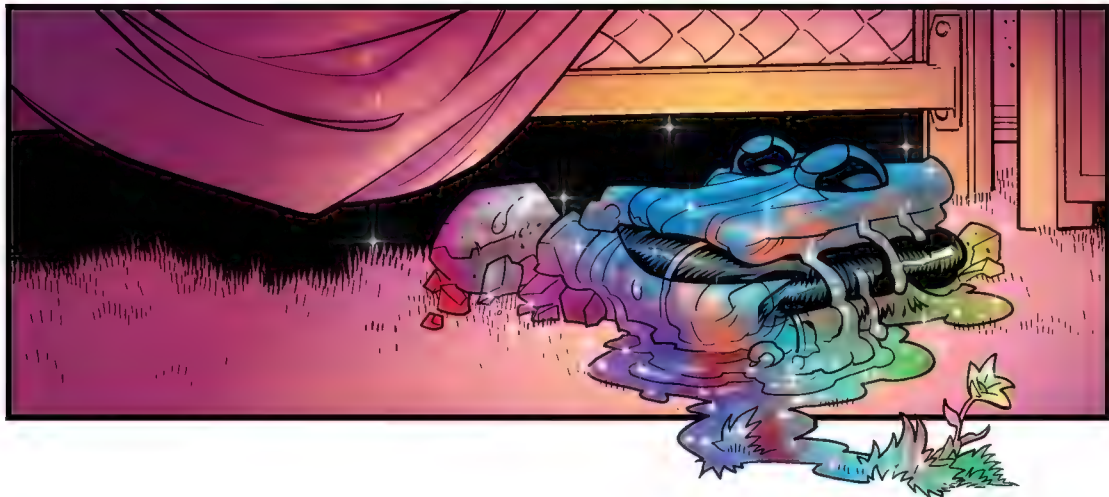
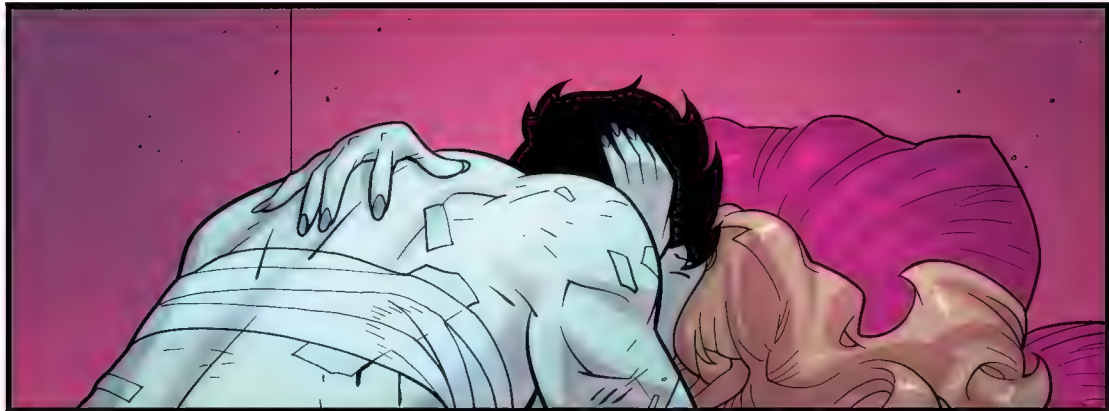
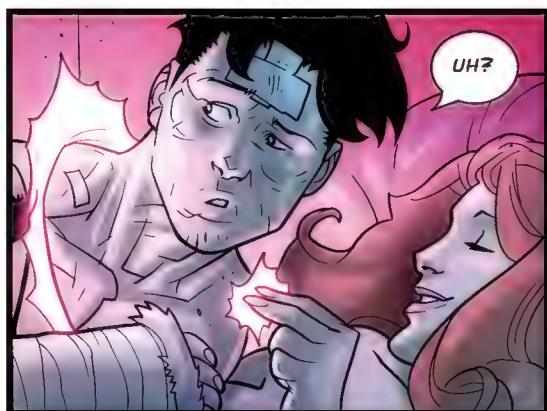
I'M A WRECK, I JUST--IT'S BEEN SO HARD, I CAME OUT OF MY COMA, YOU WERE FIGHTING CONQUEST-- I REBUILT MYSELF.

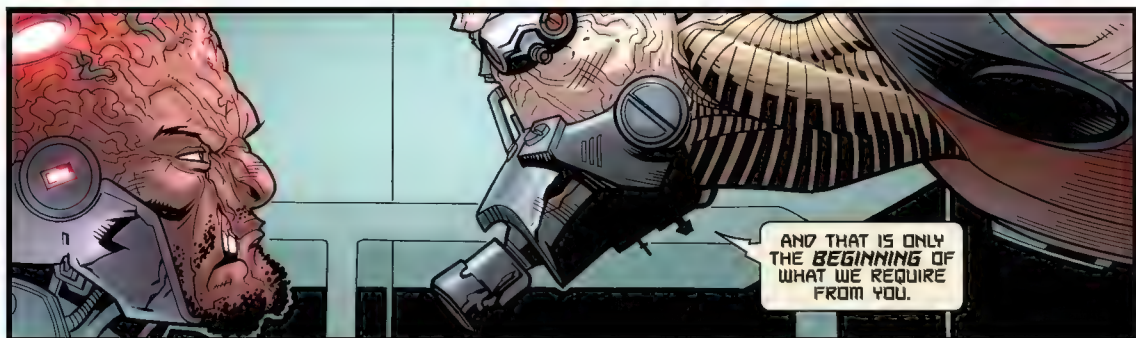
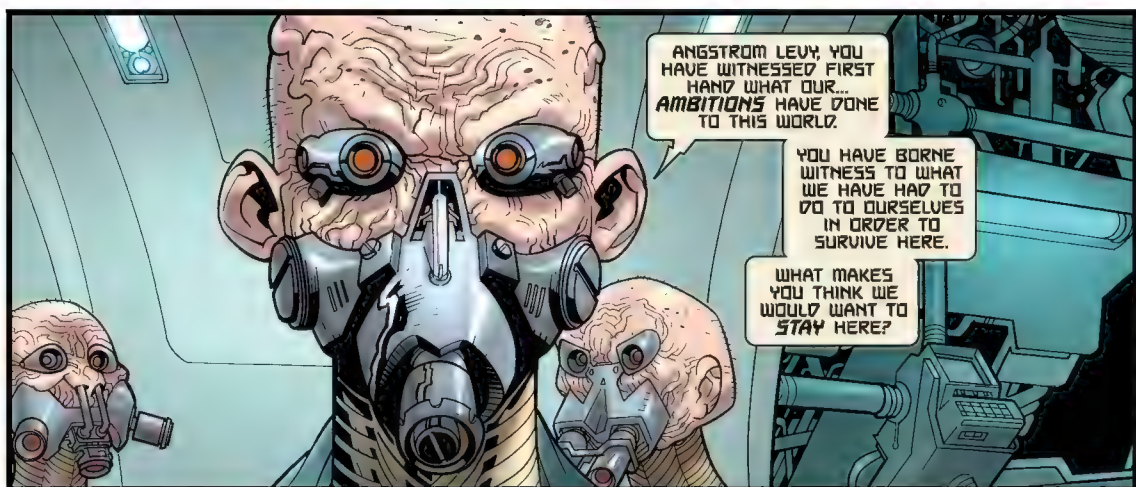


I'M SORRY, I JUST... I THOUGHT I'D LOST YOU. I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU'RE HERE AND OKAY AND...



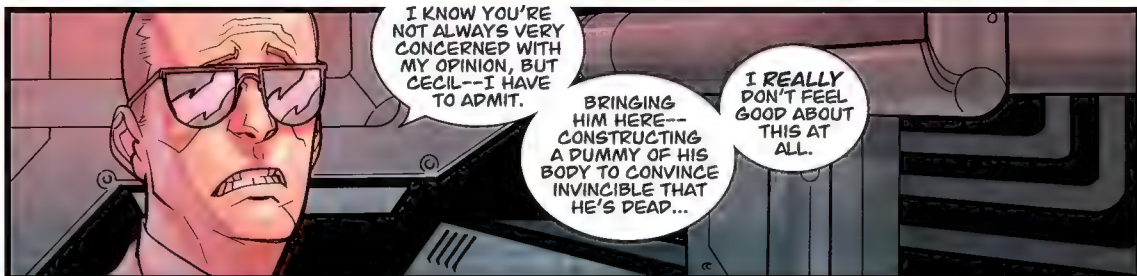
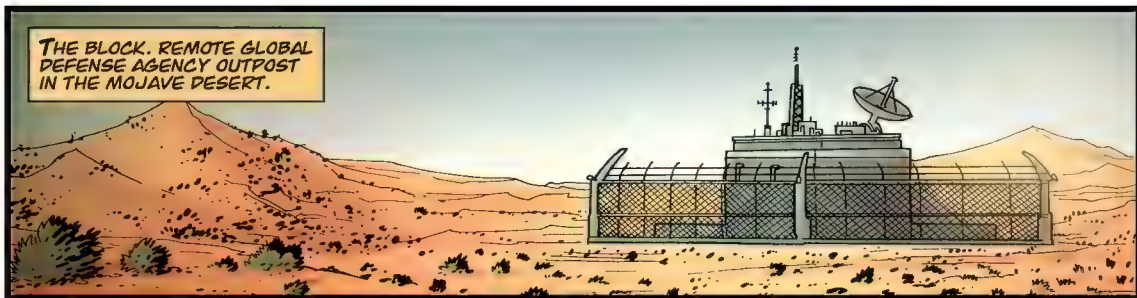








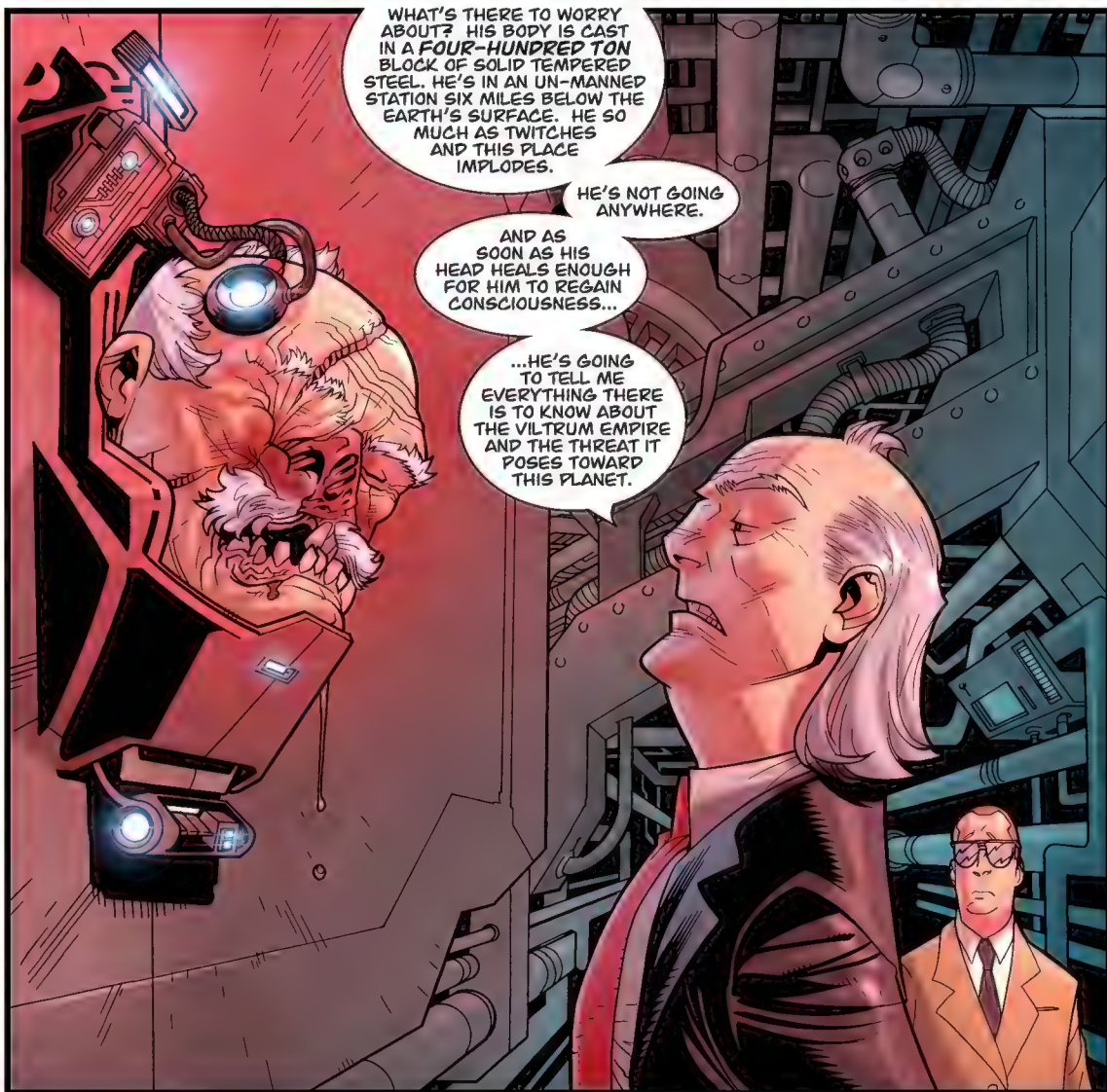
THE BLOCK. REMOTE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY OUTPOST IN THE MOJAVE DESERT.



I KNOW YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS VERY CONCERNED WITH MY OPINION, BUT CECIL--I HAVE TO ADMIT.

BRINGING HIM HERE-- CONSTRUCTING A DUMMY OF HIS BODY TO CONVINCE INVINCIBLE THAT HE'S DEAD...

I REALLY DON'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT THIS AT ALL.

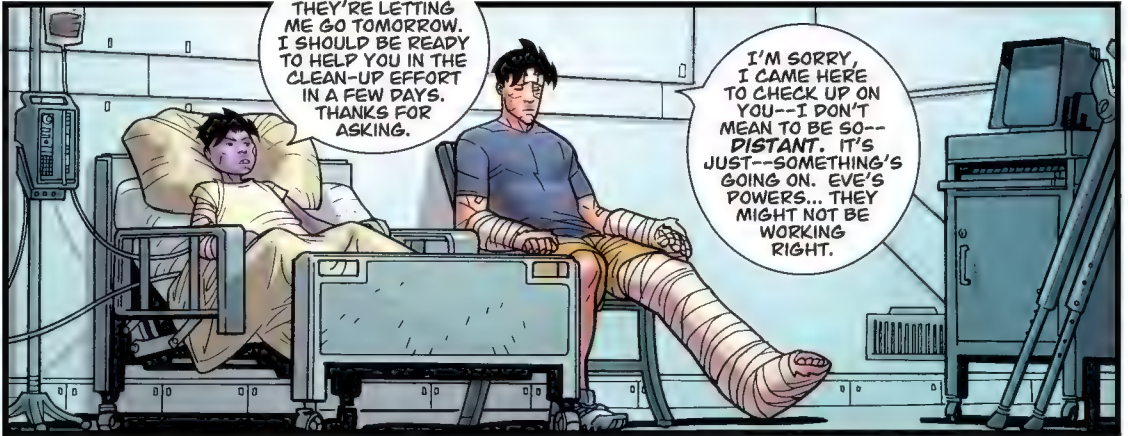
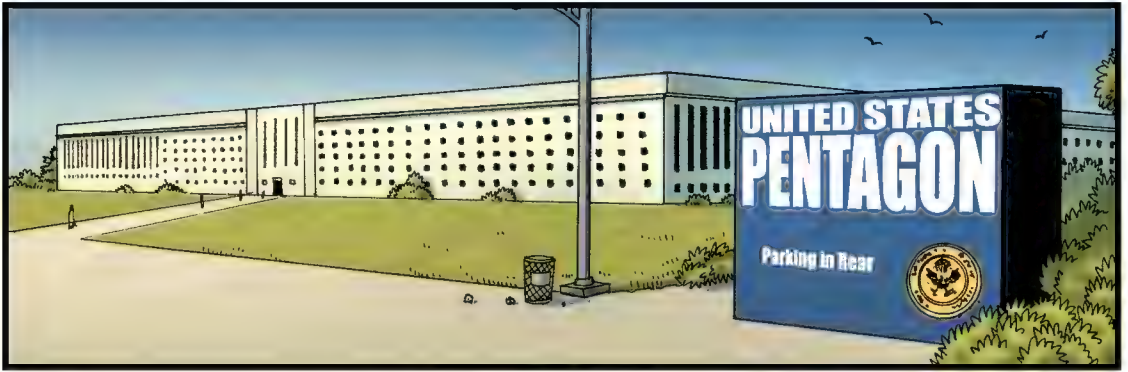


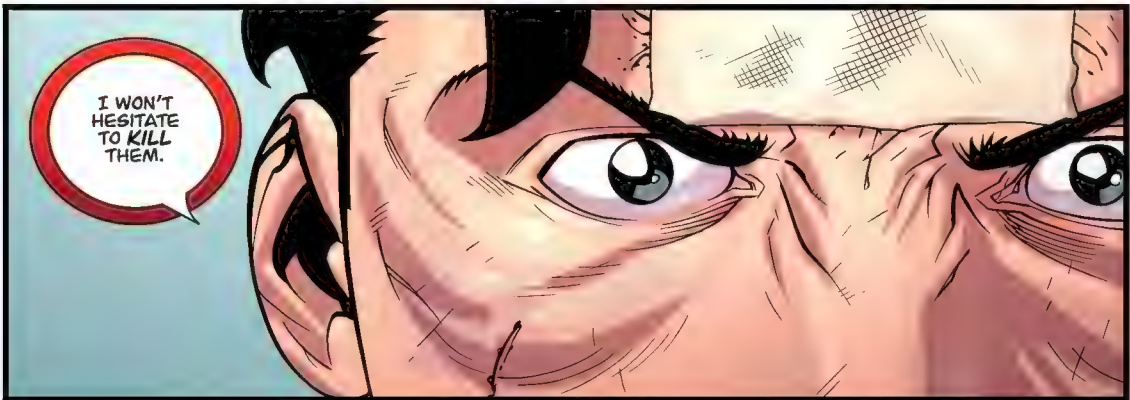
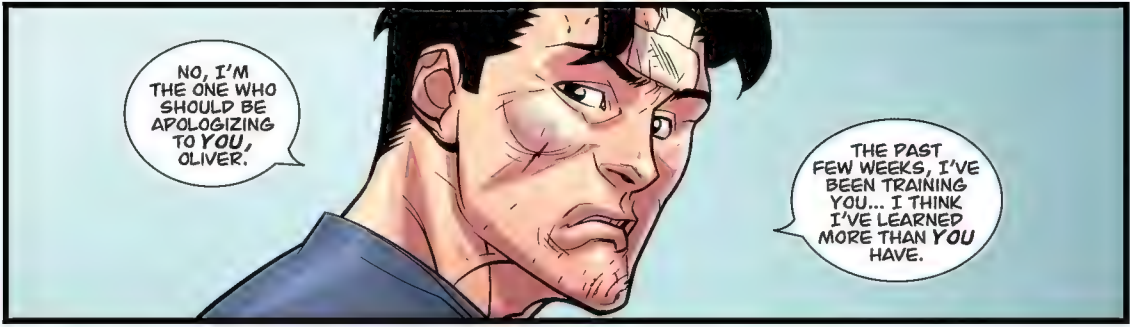
WHAT'S THERE TO WORRY ABOUT? HIS BODY IS CAST IN A FOUR-HUNDRED TON BLOCK OF SOLID TEMPERED STEEL. HE'S IN AN UN-MANNED STATION SIX MILES BELOW THE EARTH'S SURFACE. HE SO MUCH AS TWITCHES AND THIS PLACE IMPLODES.

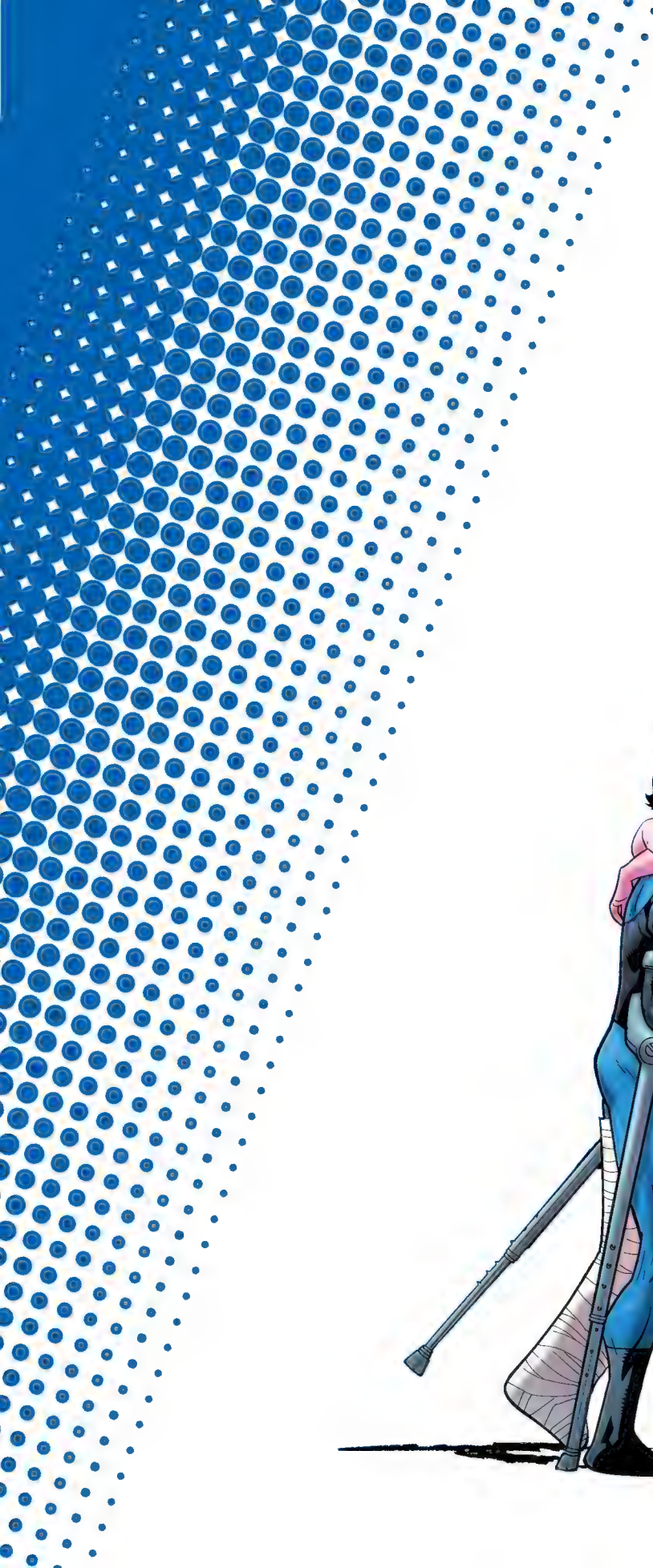
HE'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

AND AS SOON AS HIS HEAD HEALS ENOUGH FOR HIM TO REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS...

...HE'S GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE VILTRUM EMPIRE AND THE THREAT IT POSES TOWARD THIS PLANET.








CHAPTER 66





THERE ARE
LESS THAN FIFTY
FULL-BLOODED
VILTRUMITES LEFT
IN THE UNIVERSE...
BUT IT WAS NOT
ALWAYS THIS
WAY.

ALLEN, MY
FRIEND... IT IS
TIME SOMEONE
KNEW THE
TRUTH ABOUT
THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE.



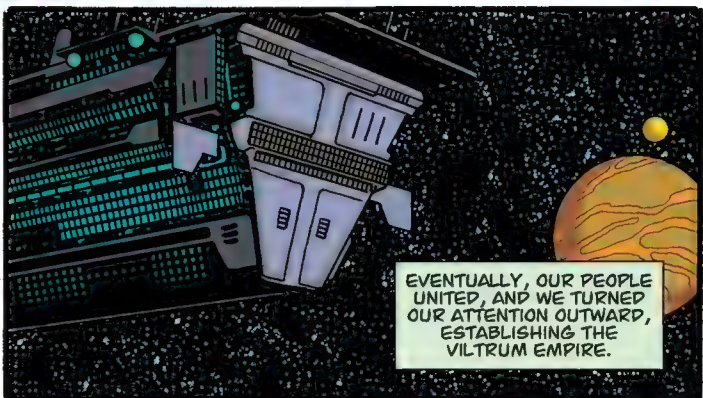
YOU KNOW A GREAT DEAL
ABOUT THE PLANET VILTRUM,
OUR HISTORY AND
OUR EMPIRE...

...AND MUCH OF
IT IS TRUE.

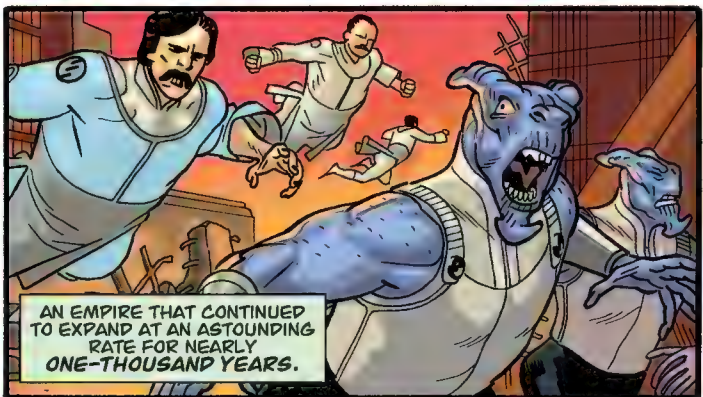


WE WERE A VIOLENT RACE
WHO VALUED STRENGTH
ABOVE ALL ELSE.

TO RID OURSELVES OF
ANY WEAKNESS WE
SLAUGHTERED EACH
OTHER UNTIL WE WERE
BRED INTO THE
VILTRUMITES YOU
KNOW TODAY.



EVENTUALLY, OUR PEOPLE
UNITED, AND WE TURNED
OUR ATTENTION OUTWARD,
ESTABLISHING THE
VILTRUM EMPIRE.

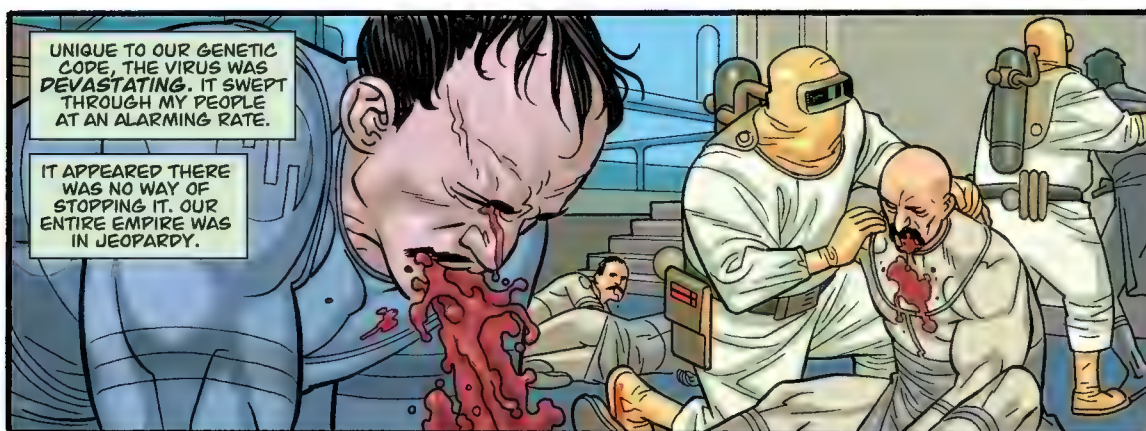


AN EMPIRE THAT CONTINUED
TO EXPAND AT AN ASTOUNDING
RATE FOR NEARLY
ONE-THOUSAND YEARS.



UNTIL OUR
ENEMIES MADE
A WEAPON
CAPABLE OF
HURTING US.

THEY MADE
A VIRUS.



UNIQUE TO OUR GENETIC CODE, THE VIRUS WAS DEVASTATING. IT SWEEPED THROUGH MY PEOPLE AT AN ALARMING RATE.

IT APPEARED THERE WAS NO WAY OF STOPPING IT. OUR ENTIRE EMPIRE WAS IN JEOPARDY.



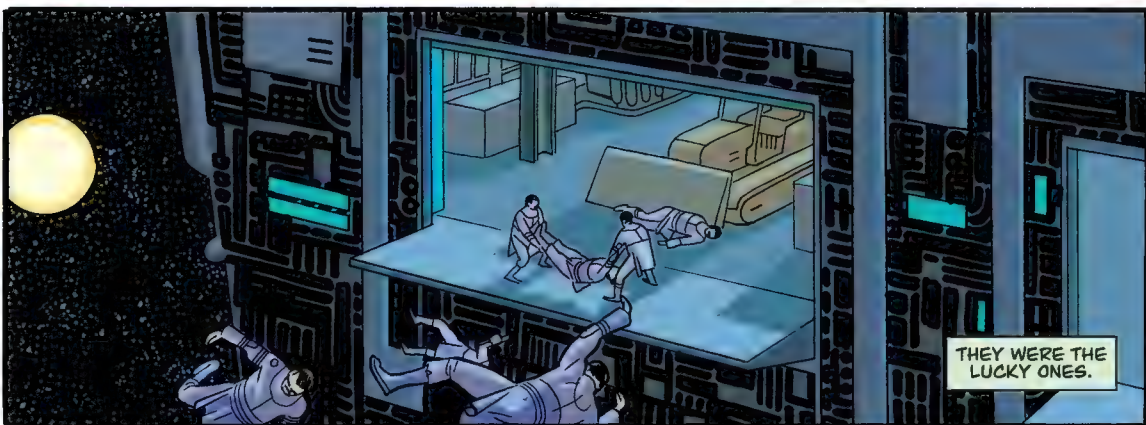
ATTEMPTS WERE MADE TO GUARANTINE THOSE WHO BECAME INFECTED... BUT IT WAS TOO LATE.

ALMOST THE ENTIRE POPULATION WAS INFECTED WITH WHAT WOULD BECOME KNOWN AS THE SCOURGE VIRUS.

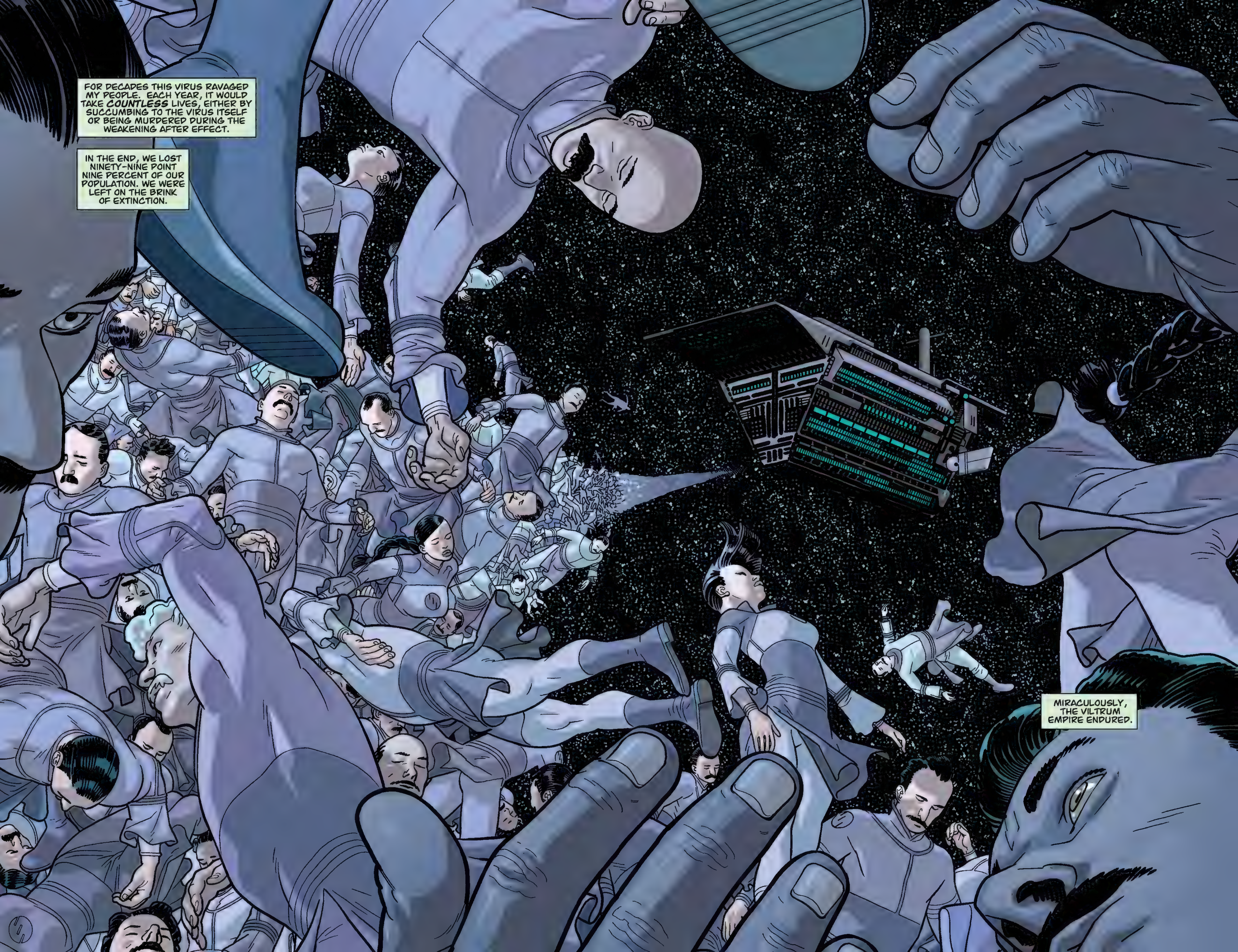


THOSE WHO SURVIVED THE VIRUS DISCOVERED ITS DEADLY AFTER EFFECTS.

THERE WAS A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME AFTER THE VIRUS HAD LEFT THEIR SYSTEM, WHERE THEIR STRENGTH AND INVULNERABILITY HAD BEEN GREATLY DIMINISHED.



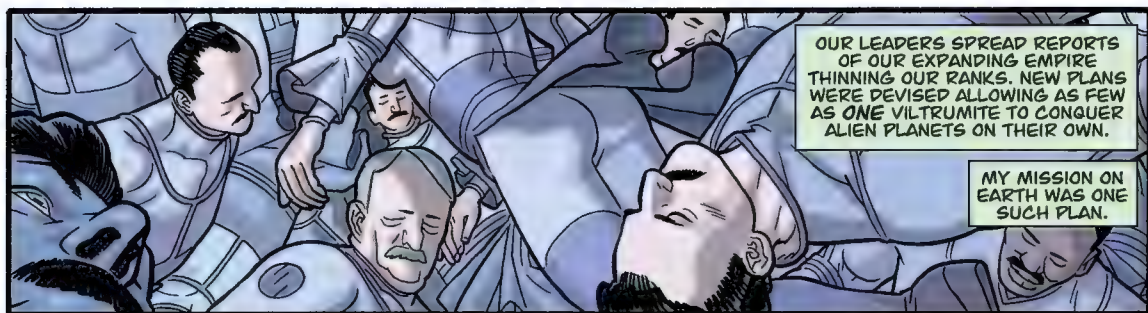
THEY WERE THE LUCKY ONES.



FOR DECADES THIS VIRUS RAVAGED MY PEOPLE. EACH YEAR, IT WOULD TAKE COUNTLESS LIVES, EITHER BY SUCCUMBING TO THE VIRUS ITSELF OR BEING MURDERED DURING THE WEAKENING AFTER EFFECT.

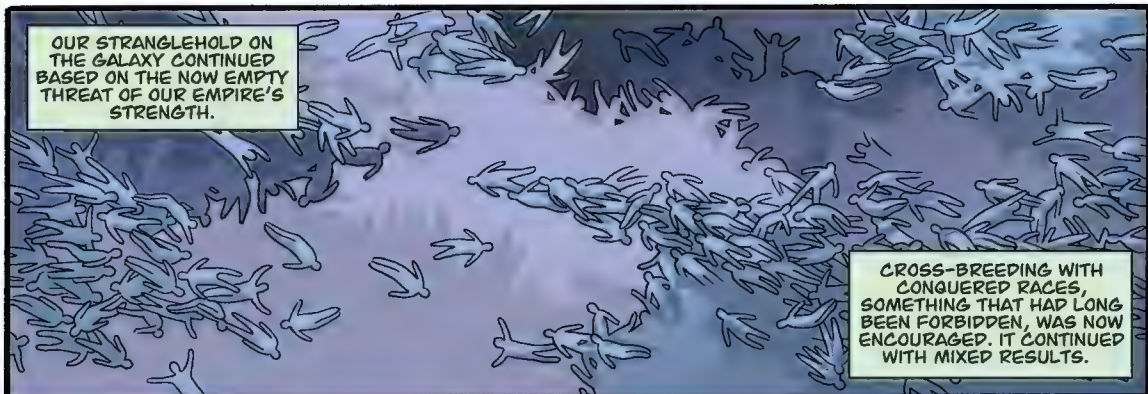
IN THE END, WE LOST NINETY-NINE POINT NINE PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION. WE WERE LEFT ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION.

MIRACULOUSLY, THE VILTRUM EMPIRE ENDURED.



OUR LEADERS SPREAD REPORTS OF OUR EXPANDING EMPIRE THINNING OUR RANKS. NEW PLANS WERE DEVISED ALLOWING AS FEW AS ONE VILTRUMITE TO CONQUER ALIEN PLANETS ON THEIR OWN.

MY MISSION ON EARTH WAS ONE SUCH PLAN.



OUR STRANGLEHOLD ON THE GALAXY CONTINUED BASED ON THE NOW EMPTY THREAT OF OUR EMPIRE'S STRENGTH.

CROSS-BREEDING WITH CONQUERED RACES, SOMETHING THAT HAD LONG BEEN FORBIDDEN, WAS NOW ENCOURAGED. IT CONTINUED WITH MIXED RESULTS.



UNTIL EARTH, UNTIL MY SON. I NEVER TOLD HIM OUR MAIN REASON FOR CONQUERING EARTH... WHAT MADE IT SO IMPORTANT.

HUMAN DNA IS ALMOST ONE-HUNDRED PERCENT COMPATIBLE WITH VILTRUMITES. EARTH IS TO BECOME A BREEDING CAMP.



THE RESULTS OF THE SCOURGE VIRUS WERE HIDDEN, BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN.

OUR PLANET, CUT OFF FROM ANY OUTSIDE RACES, NOW STANDS AS A TRIBUTE TO OUR FALLEN BRETHREN. A REMINDER OF WHAT WE'VE SACRIFICED TO CONTINUE OUR QUEST FOR INTER-PLANETARY DOMINATION.



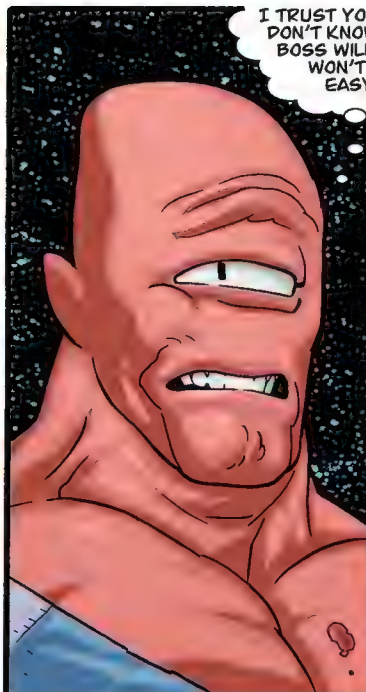
A QUEST
I NOW SEE
AS THE
POINTLESS
ENDEAVOR
THAT IT
IS...

WHAT THEY PLAN TO DO
WITH EARTH... I WAS
BORN IN A BREEDING
CAMP. I WOULDN'T WISH
THAT ON ANYONE. WE
HAVE TO WARN
MARK.



NO.

YOU HAVE
TO TAKE ME
TO YOUR PEOPLE.
I NEED TO MEET
WITH THE COALITION
OF PLANETS.
IMMEDIATELY.



I TRUST YOU, BUT I
DON'T KNOW IF MY
BOSS WILL. THIS
WON'T BE
EASY.



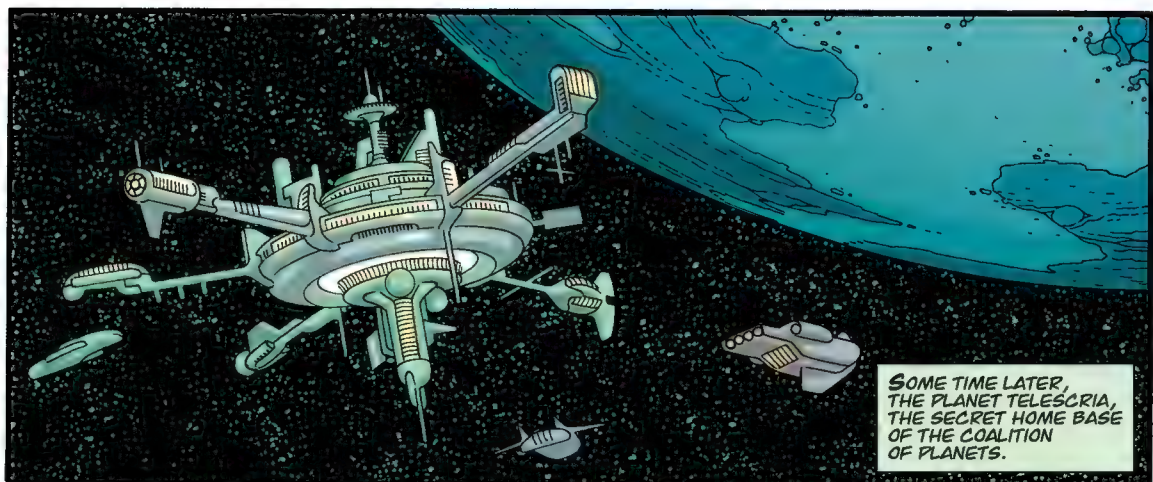
IT DOESN'T MATTER. IF
WE'RE GOING TO BE ABLE
TO SAVE EARTH AND STOP
THE VILTRUM EMPIRE
ONCE AND FOR ALL, THE
COALITION NEEDS TO
KNOW EVERYTHING
I KNOW.



WE'LL ALSO NEED THE INFORMATION
CONTAINED IN MY BOOKS THAT YOU
SCANNED. I WROTE EVERYTHING
DOWN SO I WOULDN'T NEED TO
REMEMBER IT ALL--AND THERE
IS VALUABLE INFORMATION
ENCODING IN THE
WORDS.

INFORMATION
THAT WILL GAIN
YOUR BOSS'S
TRUST.

OKAY, LET
ME GET MY
GEAR AND
THEN WE'LL
GO.



SOME TIME LATER,
THE PLANET TELESORIA,
THE SECRET HOME BASE
OF THE COALITION
OF PLANETS.



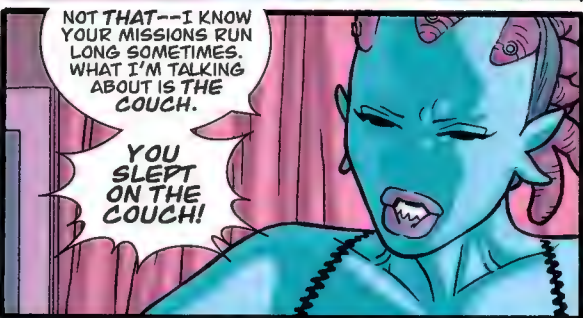
WHERE
HAVE YOU
BEEN?!



TELIA,
PEAR,
UH--I'M
SORRY.

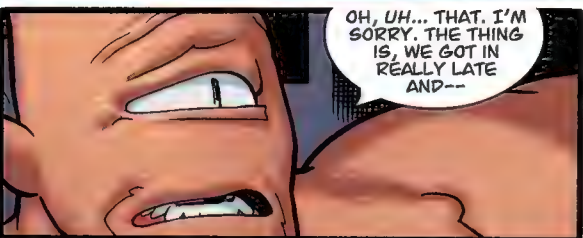
I WAS ON
THAT MISSION
AND I WAS TAKEN
PRISONER BY THE
VILTRUMITES. THEY
HELD ME IN PRISON
FOR A FEW MONTHS,
I WAS JUST
RECENTLY ABLE
TO ESCAPE.

I WOULD
HAVE CONTACTED
YOU IF I COULD
HAVE--BUT THERE
WAS NEVER AN
OPPORTUNITY
AND--



NOT THAT--I KNOW
YOUR MISSIONS RUN
LONG SOMETIMES.
WHAT I'M TALKING
ABOUT IS THE
COUCH.

YOU
SLEPT
ON THE
COUCH!



OH, UH... THAT. I'M
SORRY. THE THING
IS, WE GOT IN
REALLY LATE
AND--



I DON'T CARE HOW LATE YOU GET BACK FROM A MISSION. YOU KNOW THE RULES. YOU WAKE ME UP!

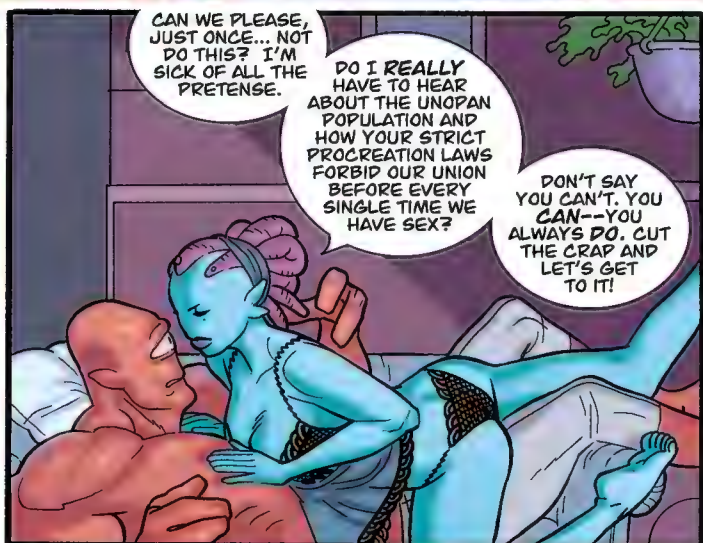
I'VE BEEN LIVING WITHOUT FOR MONTHS AND I AM HUNGRY! NOW GIVE IT TO ME YOU UNOPAN GOD.

GIVE IT TO ME NOW!



TELIA, PLEASE. I CAN'T RIGHT NOW.

STOP--!



CAN WE PLEASE, JUST ONCE... NOT DO THIS? I'M SICK OF ALL THE PRETENSE.

DO I REALLY HAVE TO HEAR ABOUT THE UNOPAN POPULATION AND HOW YOUR STRICT PROCREATION LAWS FORBID OUR UNION BEFORE EVERY SINGLE TIME WE HAVE SEX?

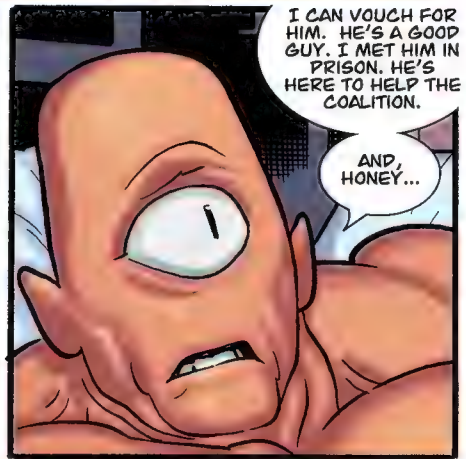
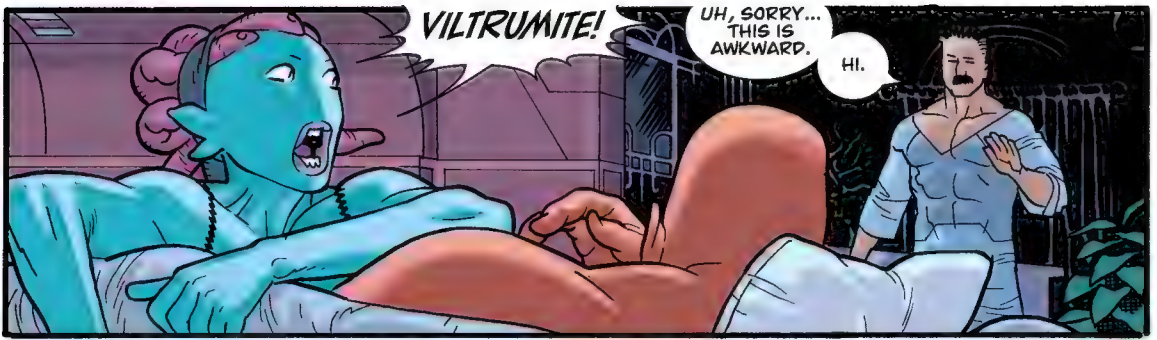
DON'T SAY YOU CAN'T. YOU CAN--YOU ALWAYS DO. CUT THE CRAP AND LET'S GET TO IT!

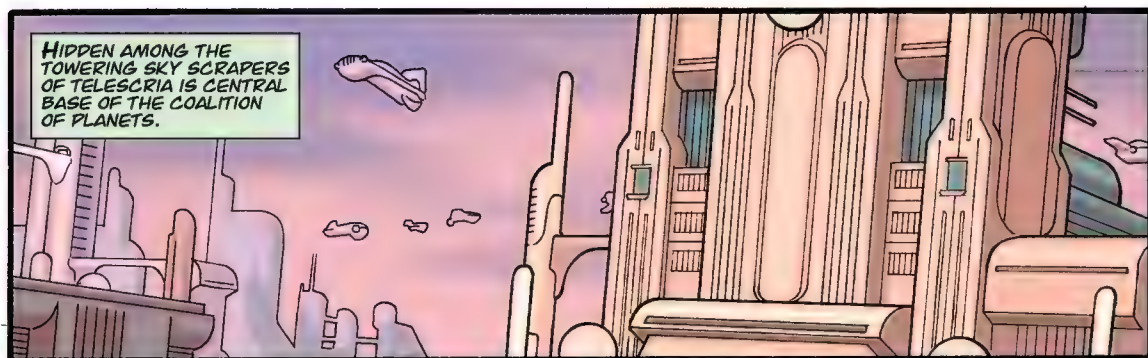


NO, THAT'S NOT IT--

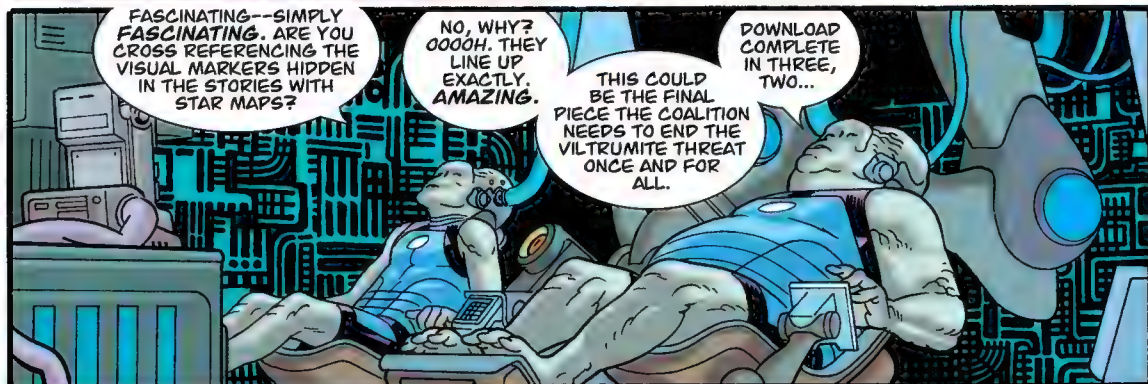


WAIT A MINUTE... DID YOU SAY "WE" GOT IN REALLY LATE?





HIDDEN AMONG THE TOWERING SKY SCRAPERS OF TELESCRIA IS CENTRAL BASE OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS.

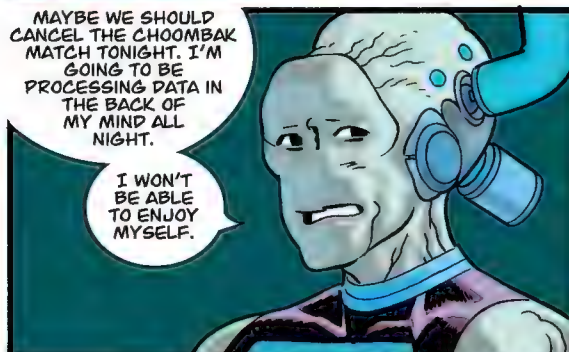


FASCINATING--SIMPLY FASCINATING. ARE YOU CROSS REFERENCING THE VISUAL MARKERS HIDDEN IN THE STORIES WITH STAR MAPS?

NO, WHY? 0000H. THEY LINE UP EXACTLY. AMAZING.

DOWNLOAD COMPLETE IN THREE, TWO...

THIS COULD BE THE FINAL PIECE THE COALITION NEEDS TO END THE VILTRUMITE THREAT ONCE AND FOR ALL.



MAYBE WE SHOULD CANCEL THE CHOOMBAK MATCH TONIGHT. I'M GOING TO BE PROCESSING DATA IN THE BACK OF MY MIND ALL NIGHT.

I WON'T BE ABLE TO ENJOY MYSELF.



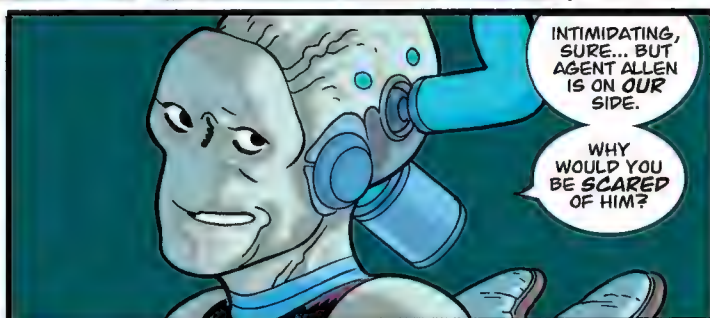
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT. WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO IT-- BUT, DUTY CALLS!

HOW MUCH LONGER DO YOU THINK THEY'LL BE IN WITH THAEDUS? WE NEED TO DISCUSS THIS WITH HIM.



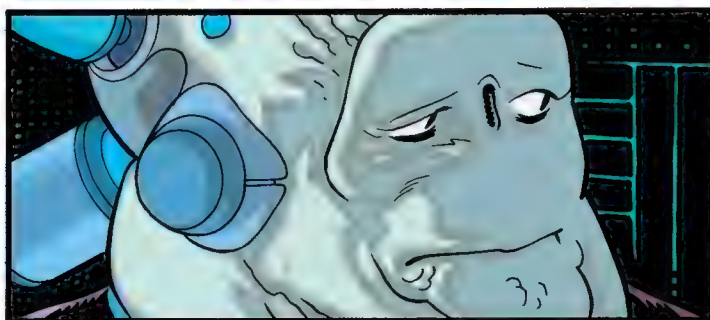
WHO KNOWS, HE'S BEEN MEETING WITH ALLEN AND THE ROGUE VILTRUMITE FOR HOURS.

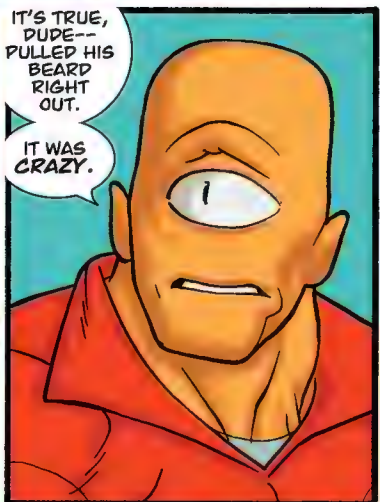
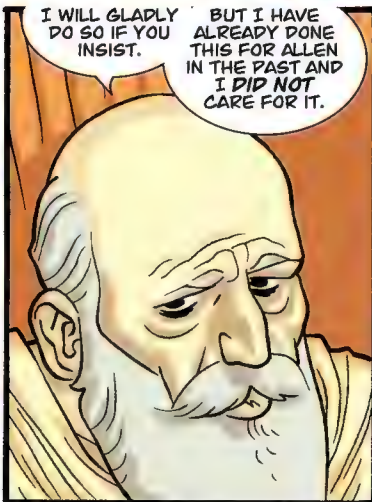
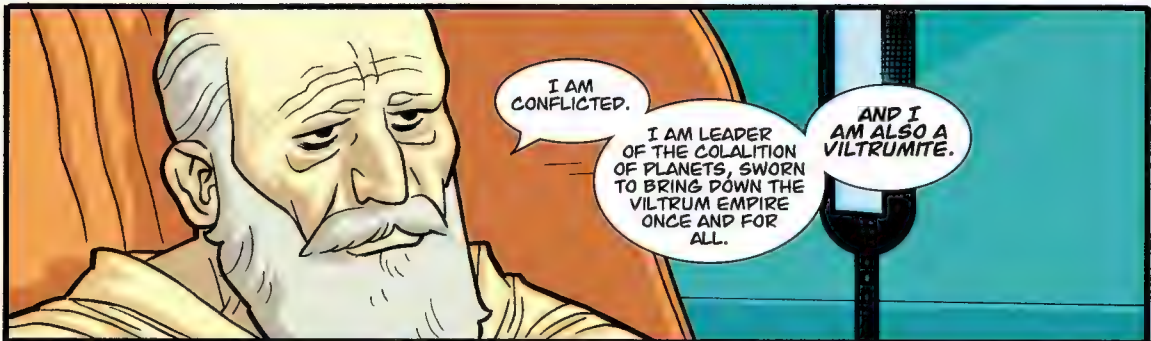
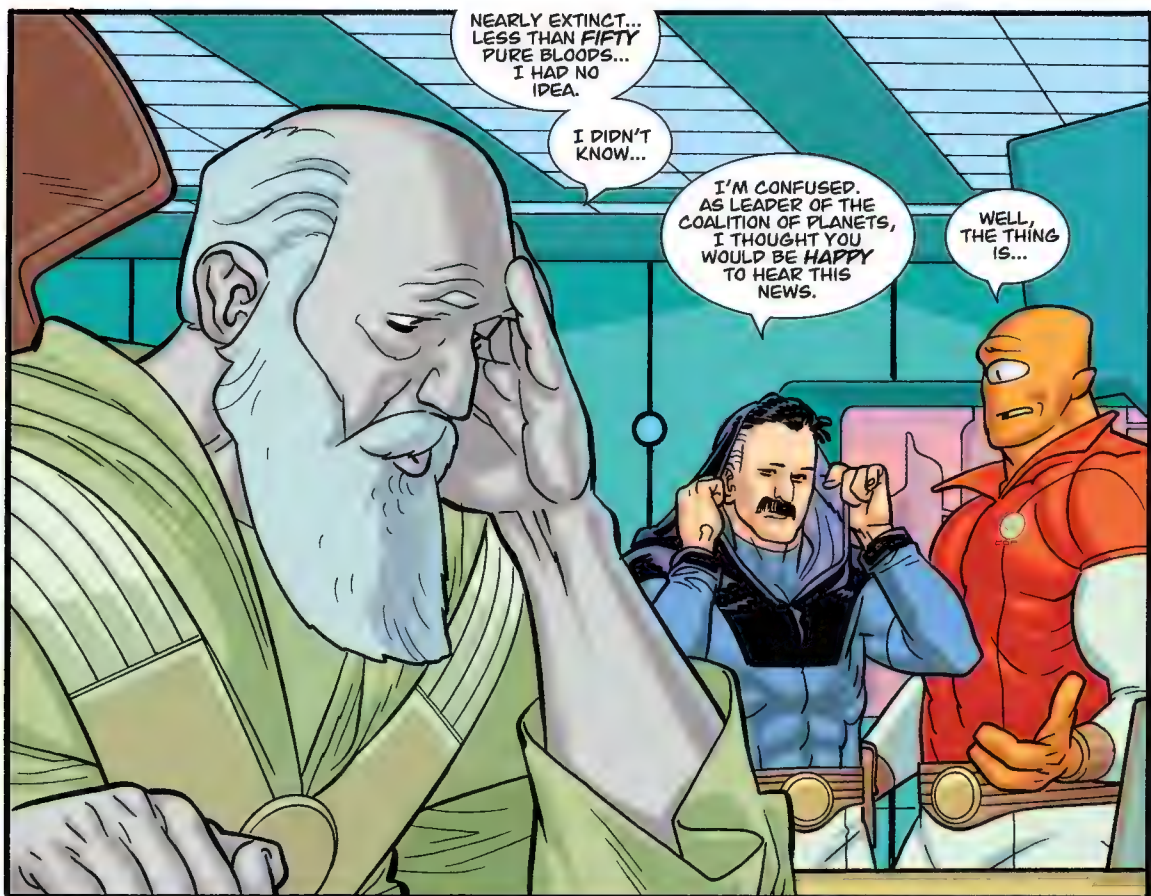
EVER SINCE HIS TRANSFORMATION, I FIND ALLEN UNSETTLING. HE TERRIFIES ME.



INTIMIDATING, SURE... BUT AGENT ALLEN IS ON OUR SIDE.

WHY WOULD YOU BE SCARED OF HIM?







BUT I THOUGHT--I ALWAYS
FEARED THAT THERE WAS
SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME,
FOR TURNING MY BACK
AGAINST THE EMPIRE--
VILTRUMITES HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN
LOYAL...

...I
THOUGHT
I WAS THE
FIRST.

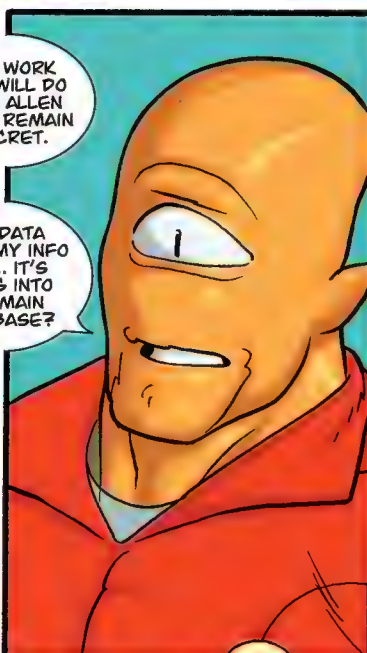
MY
BETRAYAL
WAS HIDDEN,
REMOVED FROM
HISTORY'S
RECORD.

BUT THERE
IS NO TIME FOR
THIS. WE HAVE
ALREADY BEEN
CONVERSING TOO
LONG. PEOPLE WILL
BECOME SUSPICIOUS
THAT THIS ISN'T
JUST A STANDARD
BRIEFING.

I
CAN'T
HAVE
THAT.



THERE IS AT LEAST ONE
VILTRUMITE AGENT AMONG
US, REPORTING BACK
TO THE EMPIRE.



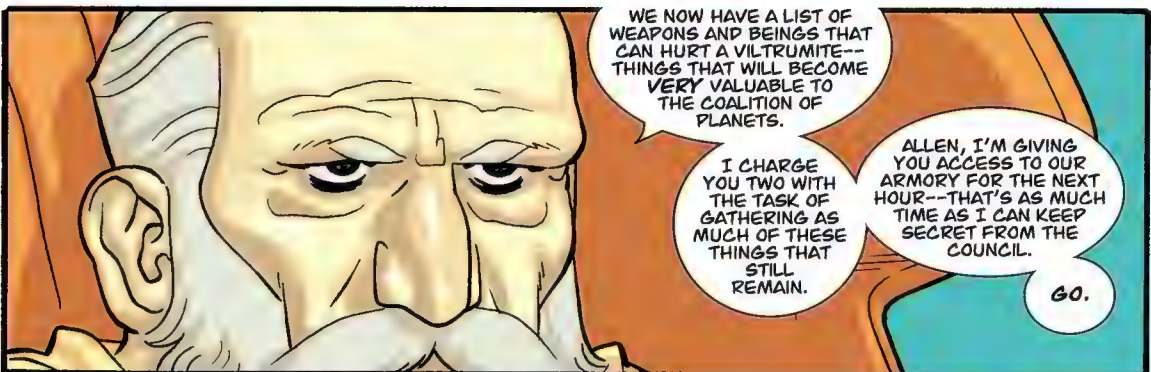
THE WORK
YOU WILL DO
WITH ALLEN
MUST REMAIN
SECRET.

THE DATA
FROM MY INFO
POD... IT'S
GOING INTO
THE MAIN
DATABASE?



NO.

MY TRUSTED INNER-CIRCLE
HAS A SEPARATE DATABASE
FOR MORE SENSITIVE DATA.
AND EVEN THEY WILL BE
UNAWARE OF YOUR
MISSION USING THIS
DATA.



WE NOW HAVE A LIST OF
WEAPONS AND BEINGS THAT
CAN HURT A VILTRUMITE--
THINGS THAT WILL BECOME
VERY VALUABLE TO
THE COALITION OF
PLANETS.

I CHARGE
YOU TWO WITH
THE TASK OF
GATHERING AS
MUCH OF THESE
THINGS THAT
STILL
REMAIN.

ALLEN, I'M GIVING
YOU ACCESS TO OUR
ARMORY FOR THE NEXT
HOUR--THAT'S AS MUCH
TIME AS I CAN KEEP
SECRET FROM THE
COUNCIL.

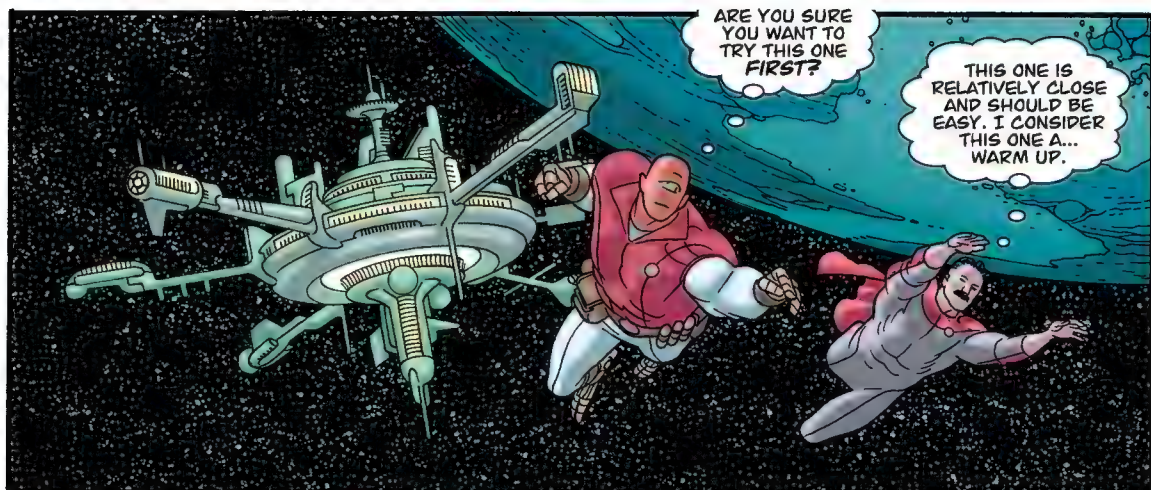
GO.



SWEET!

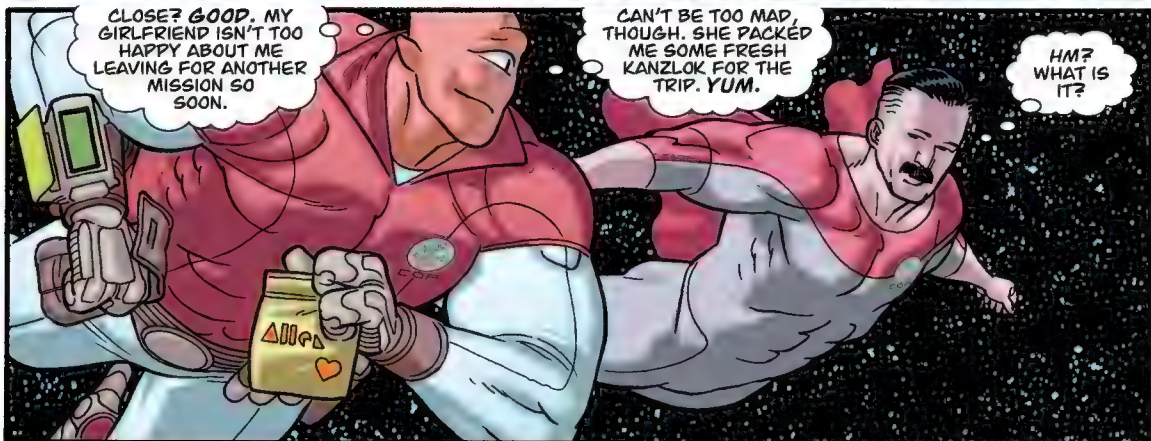
IT LOOKS
COOL, BUT WITH
YOUR STRENGTH
AREN'T ALL THOSE
GADGETS A LITTLE...
UNNECESSARY?
SEEMS LIKE THEY'LL
JUST... SLOW
YOU DOWN.

YEAH, AND
YOUR SUIT'S
ALL ABOUT
PRACTICALITY.
NICE CAPE,
DUDE.



ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO TRY THIS ONE FIRST?

THIS ONE IS RELATIVELY CLOSE AND SHOULD BE EASY. I CONSIDER THIS ONE A... WARM UP.



CLOSE? GOOD. MY GIRLFRIEND ISN'T TOO HAPPY ABOUT ME LEAVING FOR ANOTHER MISSION SO SOON.

CAN'T BE TOO MAD, THOUGH. SHE PACKED ME SOME FRESH KANZLOK FOR THE TRIP. YUM.

HM? WHAT IS IT?



ONLY THE MOST DELICIOUS THING IN THE UNIVERSE.

WANT SOME?



PASS.





THERE IT IS, THE NEBULOID BELT. IT'S BEEN... ALMOST A HUNDRED YEARS SINCE I WAS HERE.

LOOKS EXACTLY THE SAME.

IT'S... A BUNCH OF ROCKS.



HAND ME YOUR INFO POD.



JUST SAYING...



THERE'S A CODE HIDDEN IN THE TEXT. THE NUMBER OF WORDS IN THESE PARAGRAPHS I WROTE ABOUT THE ASTEROIDS WILL SPELL OUT THE COORDINATES OF THE SPECIFIC ASTEROID WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

FOLLOW ME.

SO, IF IT'S BEEN ONE-HUNDRED YEARS, GIVE OR TAKE, AND THE ASTEROIDS ARE DRIFTING AT THIS SPEED, THEIR RELATIVE DISTANCE TO EACH OTHER WOULD BE SHIFTING...

AND...

YOU GOING TO BE ABLE TO FIND THIS... WHATEVER IT IS WE'RE AFTER?

ABSOLUTELY. JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE.



...

ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP?



NO, NO... ALMOST GOT IT.

THERE.



THIS IS IT.

HOW CAN YOU BE SURE? IT'S A ROCK-- THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME.

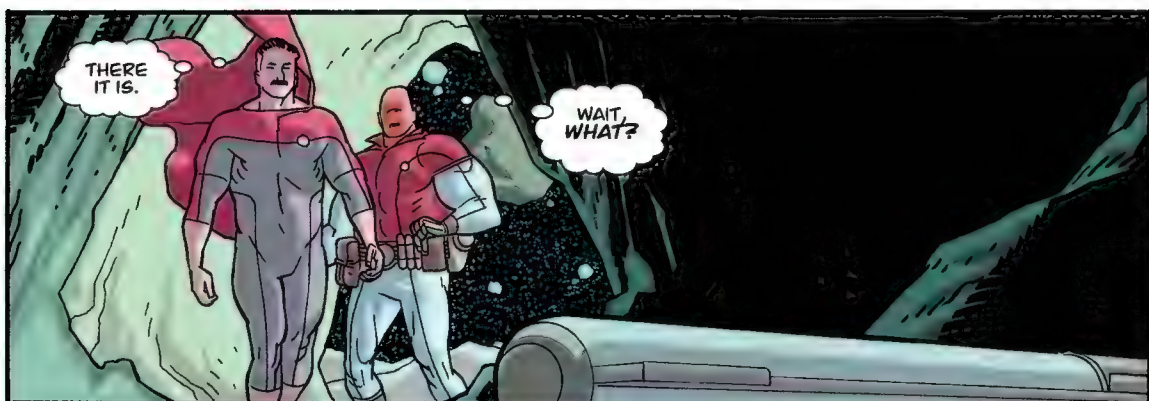


I'M NOT SURE... BUT THIS LOOKS FAMILIAR.



AH!





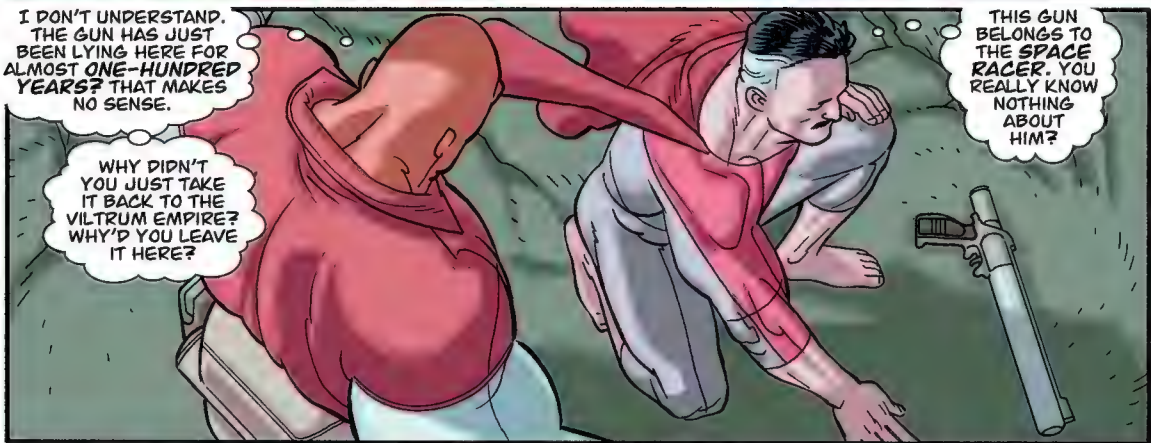
THERE IT IS.

WAIT, WHAT?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. THE GUN HAS JUST BEEN LYING HERE FOR ALMOST ONE-HUNDRED YEARS? THAT MAKES NO SENSE.

WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST TAKE IT BACK TO THE VILTRUM EMPIRE? WHY'D YOU LEAVE IT HERE?

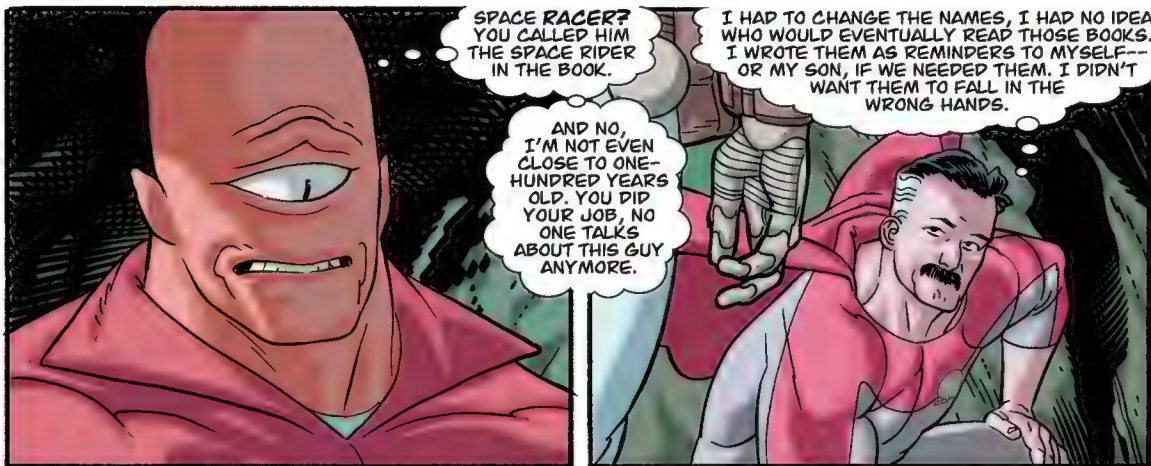
THIS GUN BELONGS TO THE SPACE RACER. YOU REALLY KNOW NOTHING ABOUT HIM?



SPACE RACER? YOU CALLED HIM THE SPACE RIDER IN THE BOOK.

I HAD TO CHANGE THE NAMES, I HAD NO IDEA WHO WOULD EVENTUALLY READ THOSE BOOKS. I WROTE THEM AS REMINDERS TO MYSELF--OR MY SON, IF WE NEEDED THEM. I DIDN'T WANT THEM TO FALL IN THE WRONG HANDS.

AND NO, I'M NOT EVEN CLOSE TO ONE-HUNDRED YEARS OLD. YOU DID YOUR JOB, NO ONE TALKS ABOUT THIS GUY ANYMORE.

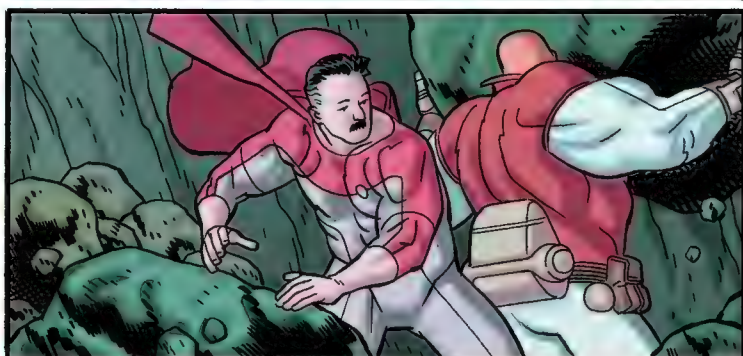


THE SPACE RACER'S GUN--THE ONE THAT FIRES INDESTRUCTIBLE BLASTS THAT WILL SHOOT THROUGH ANYTHING--CAN ONLY BE FIRED BY HIM.

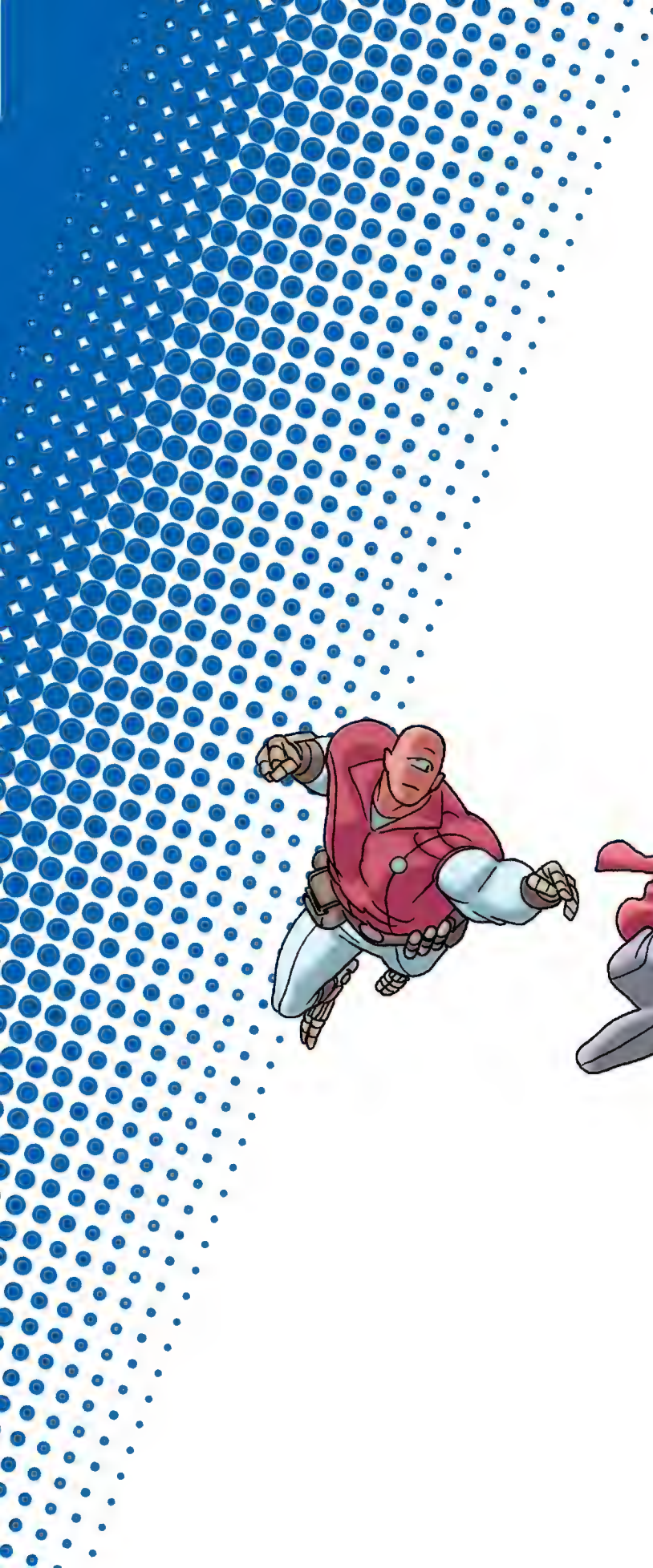
HE'S GOT SOME KIND OF BOND WITH THE GUN--IF ANYONE TRIES TO TAKE IT OR USE IT... IF I HAD TOUCHED IT WHILE HE WAS STILL ALIVE IT WOULD HAVE FLOWN INTO THE CENTER OF THE PILE OF RUBBLE I BURIED HIM UNDER AND GIVEN HIM THE MEANS TO ESCAPE.

MY ONLY OPTION WAS TO LEAVE IT EXACTLY WHERE HE DROPPED IT.



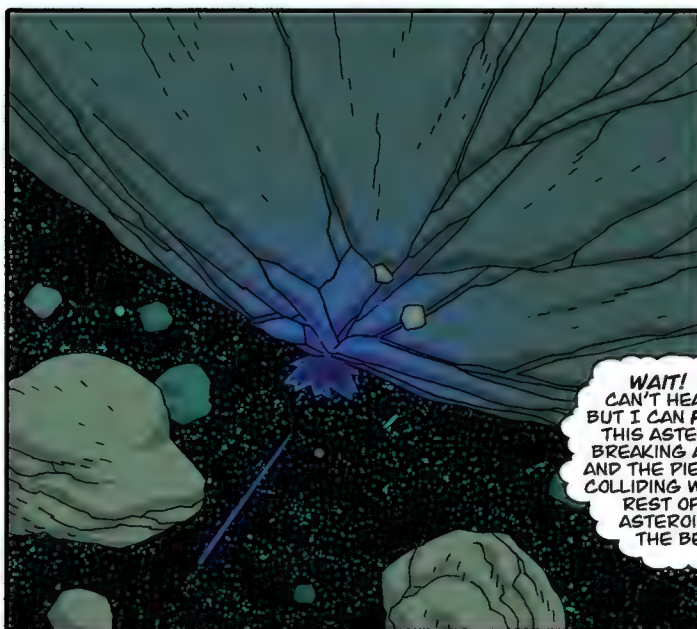
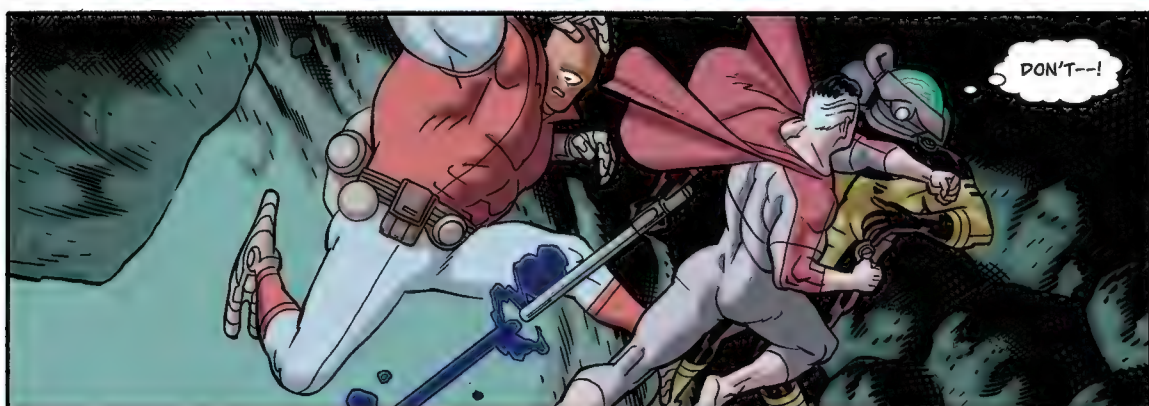




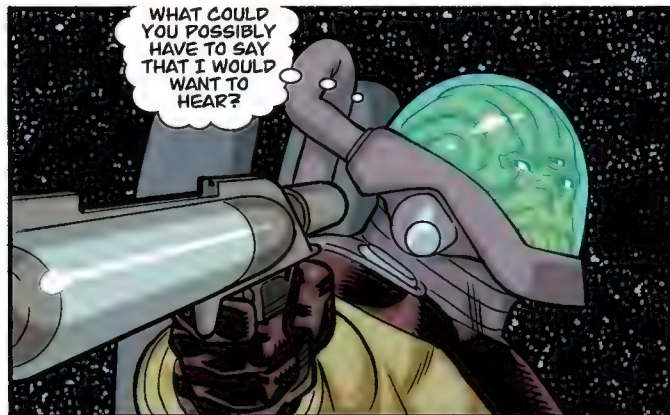
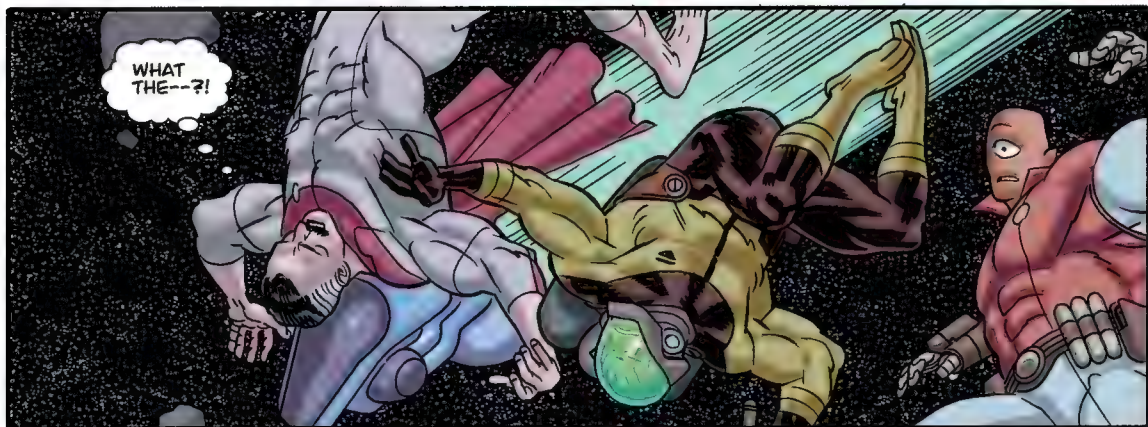
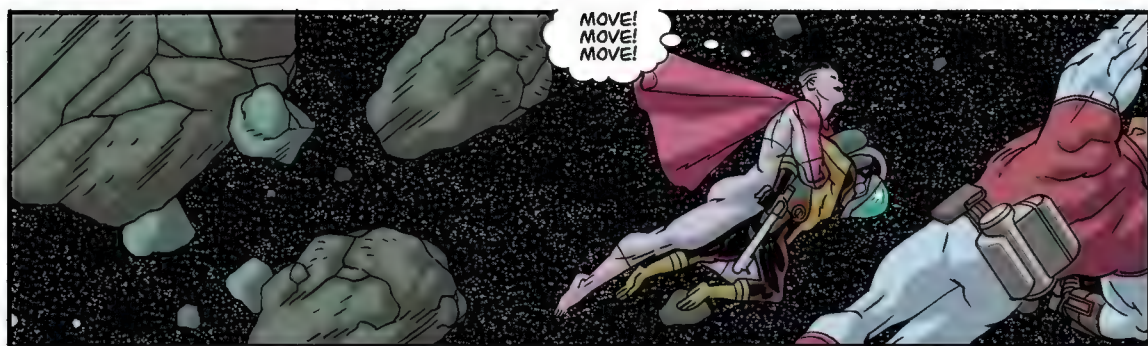


CHAPTER 67











WHY DO YOU THINK I'M HERE? WE CAME HERE TO FREE YOU--NOT TO FIGHT YOU.

WHY WOULD WE HAVE COME OTHERWISE?

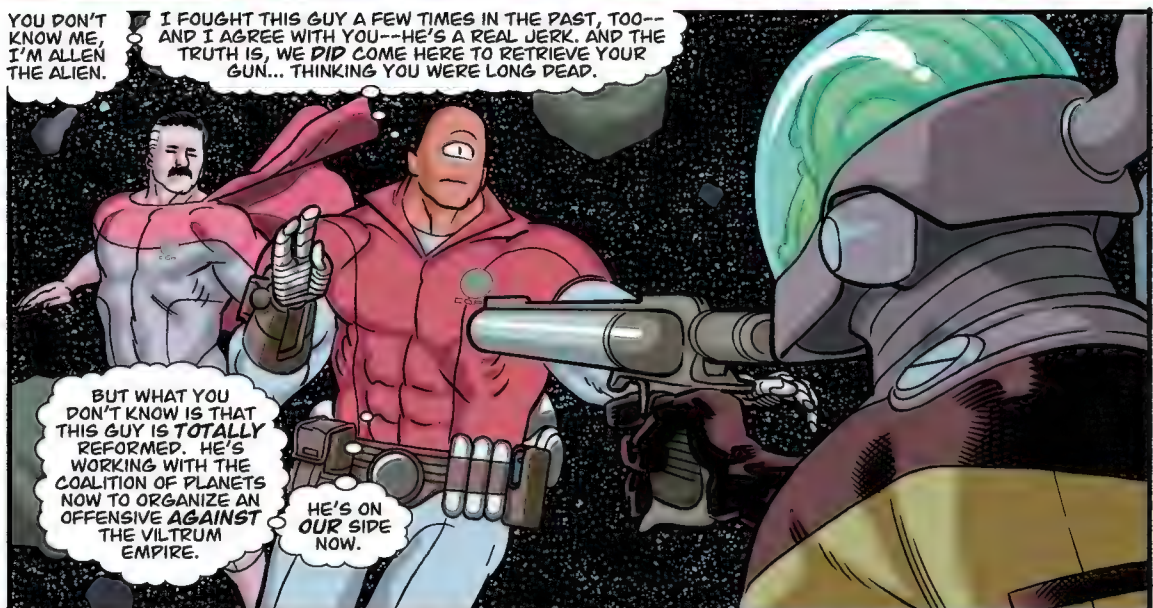


I THINK IT MORE LIKELY THAT YOU CAME HERE TO RETRIEVE MY WEAPON, THINKING I'D LONG SINCE PERISHED.



HE'S GOT YOU THERE.

MIND IF I STEP IN?



YOU DON'T KNOW ME, I'M ALLEN THE ALIEN.

I FOUGHT THIS GUY A FEW TIMES IN THE PAST, TOO-- AND I AGREE WITH YOU--HE'S A REAL JERK. AND THE TRUTH IS, WE DID COME HERE TO RETRIEVE YOUR GUN... THINKING YOU WERE LONG DEAD.

BUT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW IS THAT THIS GUY IS TOTALLY REFORMED. HE'S WORKING WITH THE COALITION OF PLANETS NOW TO ORGANIZE AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

HE'S ON OUR SIDE NOW.



ASSUMING YOU WERE ON OUR SIDE...

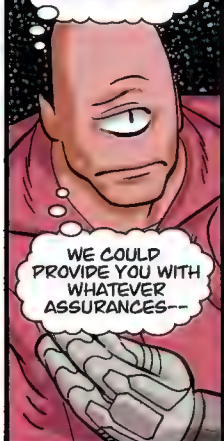


WHAT ALLEN IS SAYING IS TRUE. I AM REFORMED. I'VE TURNED AGAINST THE VILTRUMITES AND AM NOW TRYING TO DO MY PART IN ENDING THEIR REIGN.



I AM VERY SORRY FOR WHAT I'VE PUT YOU THROUGH--BUT PLEASE DON'T HOLD MY PAST ACTIONS AGAINST THE COALITION--THEY MAY BE THE UNIVERSE'S LAST BEST HOPE AGAINST THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

IF YOU COULD PLEASE
JUST ACCOMPANY US
BACK TO THE COALITION
HEADQUARTERS YOU
COULD SEE THAT WE
ARE INDEED FIGHTING
AGAINST THE
VILTRUMITES.

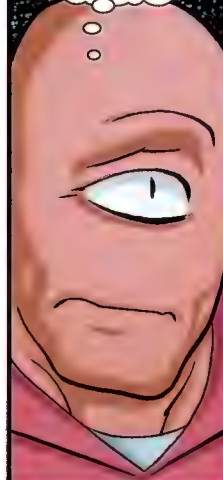


WE COULD
PROVIDE YOU WITH
WHATEVER
ASSURANCES--

I HAVE
BEEN BURIED
UNDER THAT
RUBBLE FOR
NEARLY ONE-
HUNDRED
YEARS...



I KNOW AND MY
ASSOCIATE HAS
SAID HE'S VERY
SORRY ABOUT
THAT, AND--



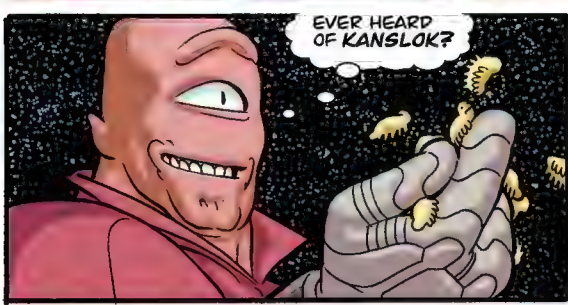
DO YOU
HAVE ANY
FOOD?



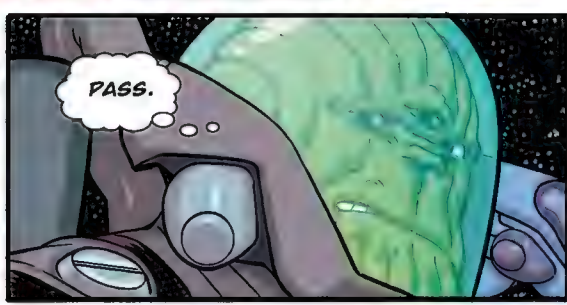
SURE DO!
JUST GIVE ME
A SECOND...



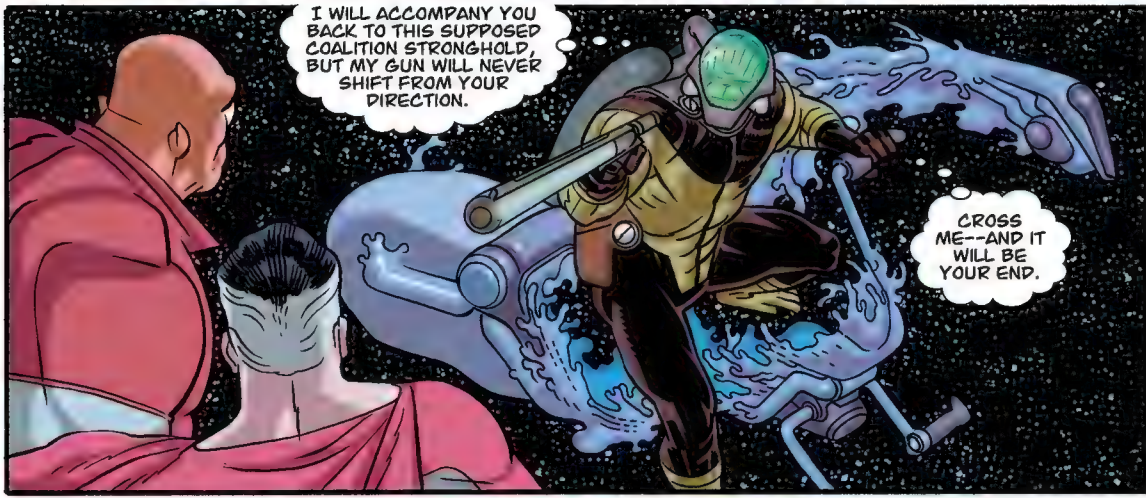
EVER HEARD
OF KANSLOK?



PASS.



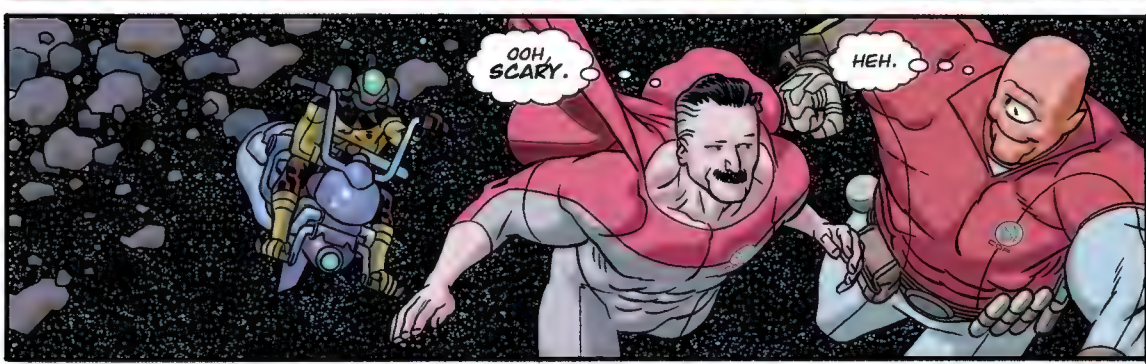
I WILL ACCOMPANY YOU
BACK TO THIS SUPPOSED
COALITION STRONGHOLD,
BUT MY GUN WILL NEVER
SHIFT FROM YOUR
DIRECTION.

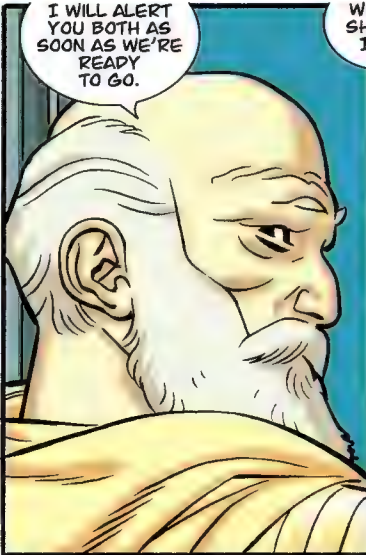
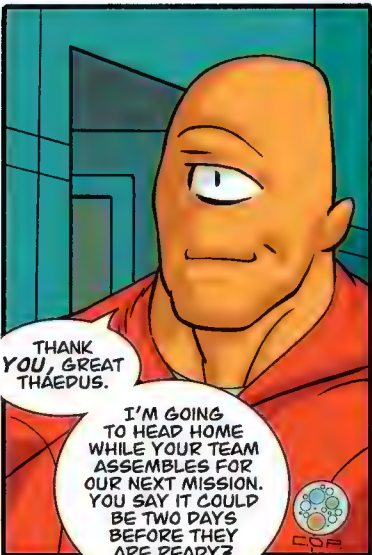
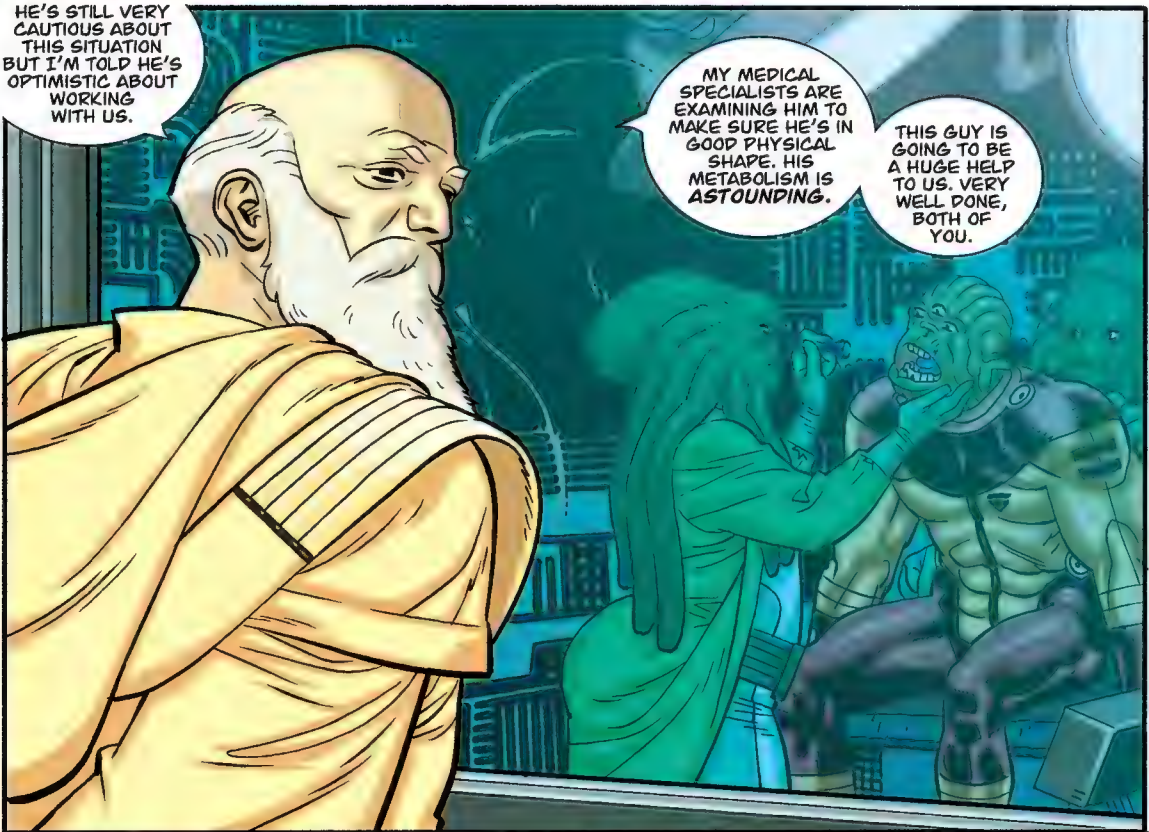
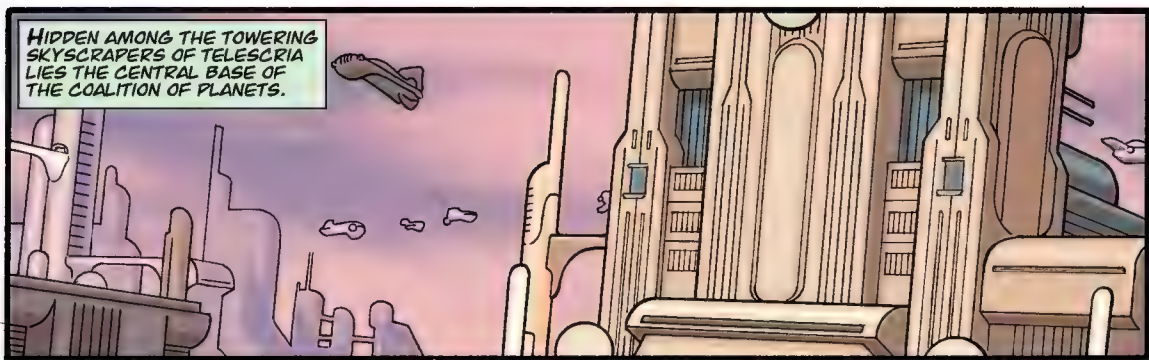


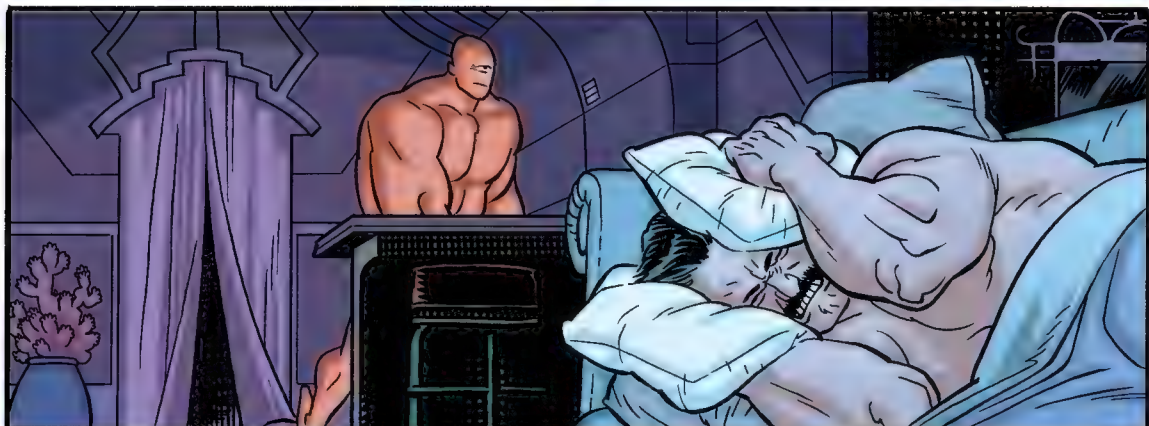
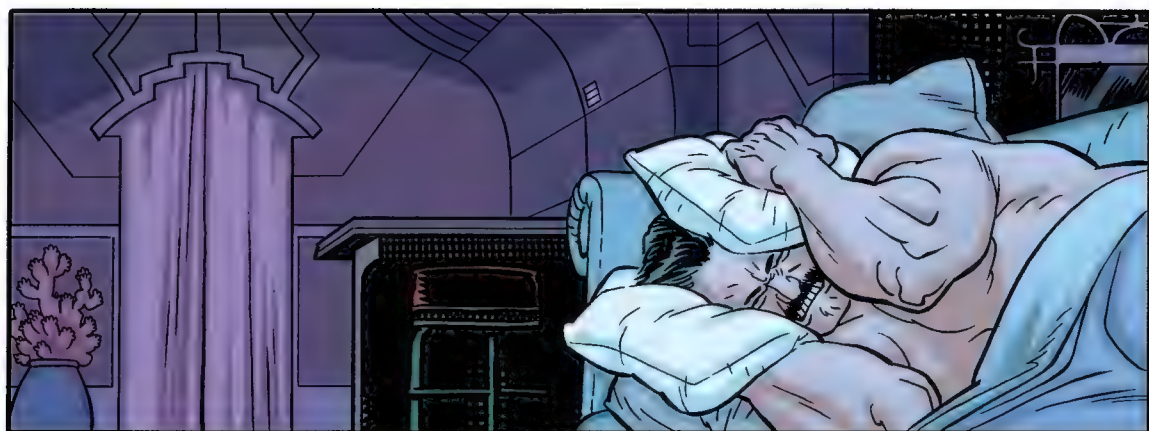
CROSS
ME--AND IT
WILL BE
YOUR END.

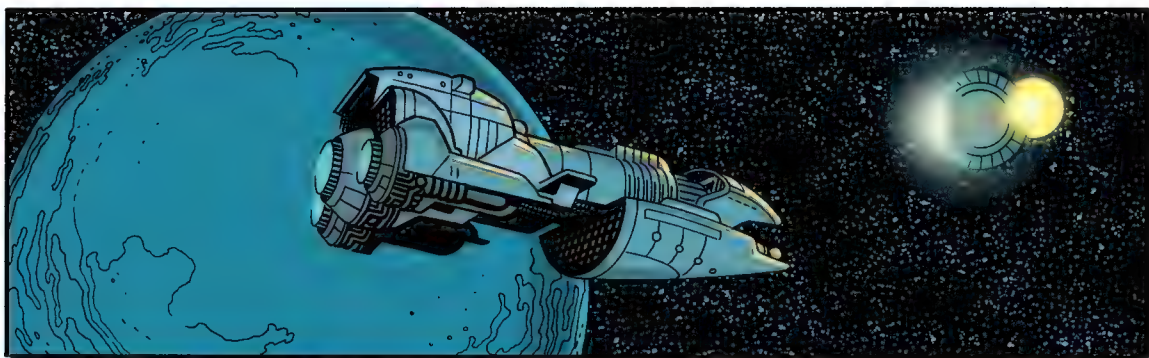
OOH
SCARY.

HEH.









THE ROGNARR ARE VICIOUS. WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL. WHEN THE VILTRUMITES DISCOVERED THIS RACE OF MONSTERS, THEY SENT A FEW TEAMS HERE TO TRY AND DESTROY THEM-- TO DISASTROUS RESULTS. THESE THINGS ARE INDESTRUCTIBLE.

FINALLY, I CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF USING A SOLAR DISK TO BLOCK THEIR SUN-- FREEZING THEM. IF THESE THINGS THAW OUT WHILE WE'RE HERE-- WE'RE IN TROUBLE.

WITH ALL THIS ICE-- HOW ARE WE GOING TO FIND THEM?



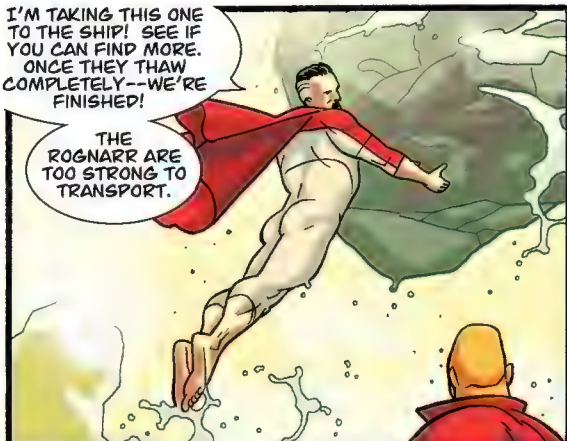
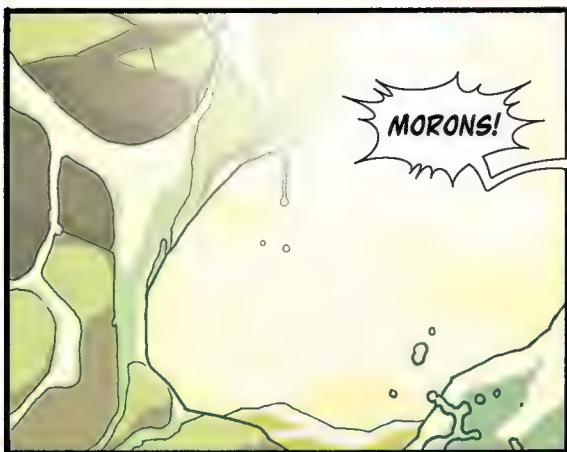
YOU'RE RIGHT.

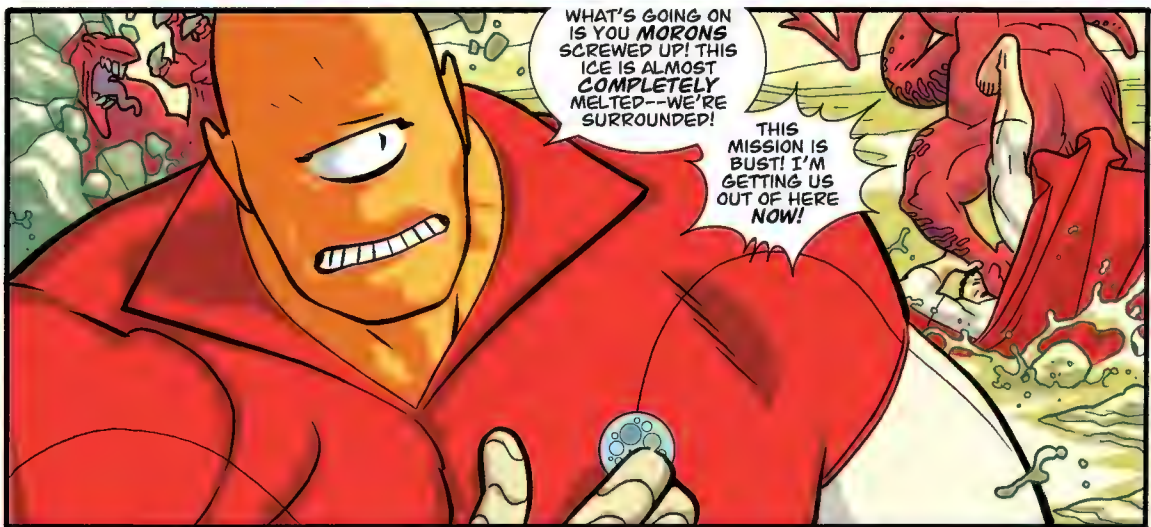
NOLAN TO BRIDGE. WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO PREPARE A TEAM TO TRANSPORT THESE THINGS TO THE CARGO HOLD BEFORE THEY COMPLETELY THAW OUT. THE ONLY WAY WE'RE GOING TO FIND THEM IS BY REMOVING THE SOLAR DISK.

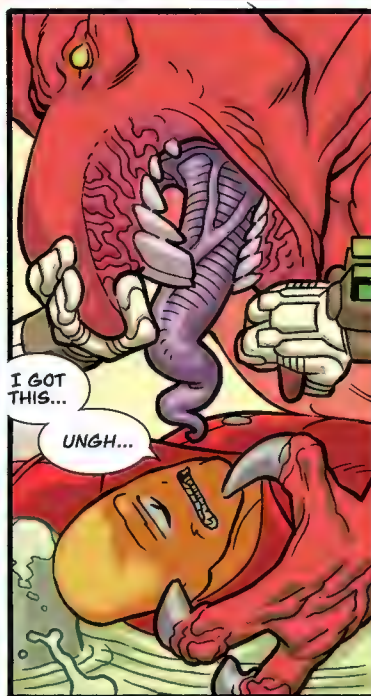
WE CAN HANDLE THAT ON OUR OWN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

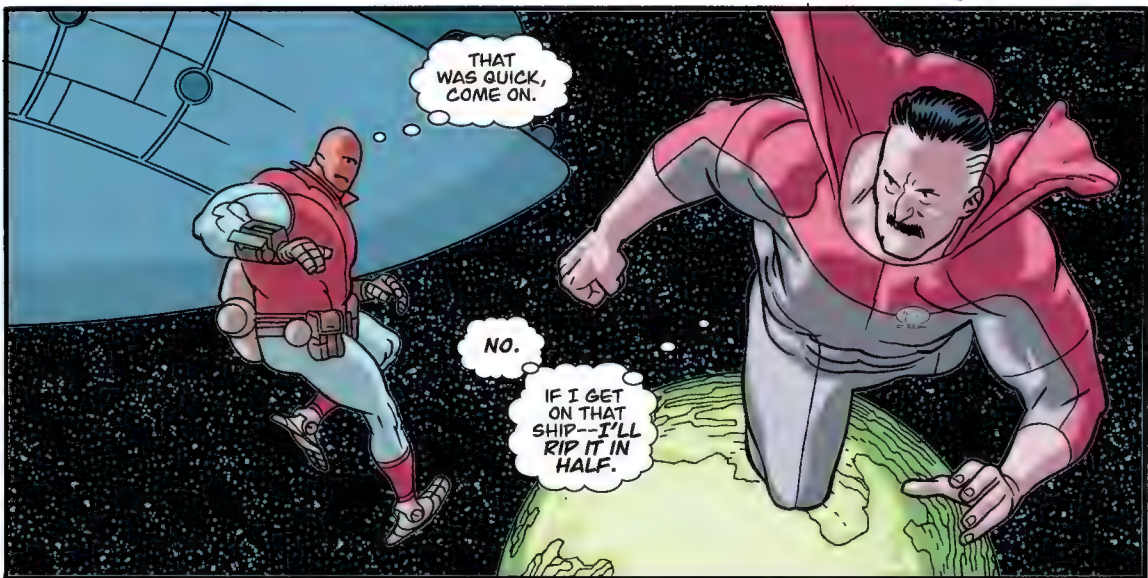
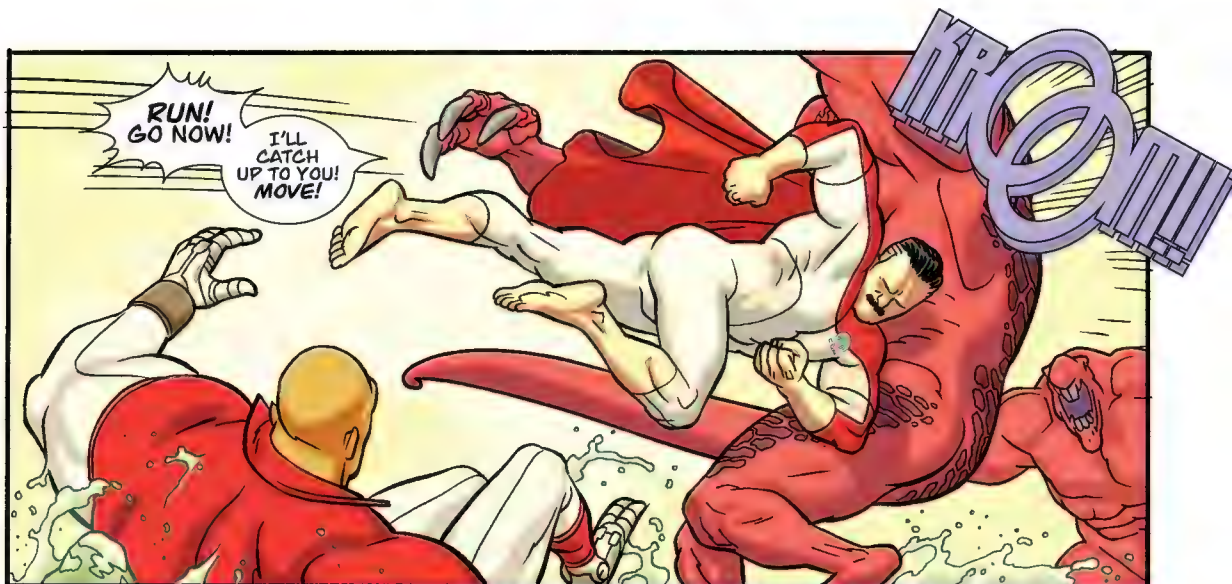
DOWNLOAD, FIRE AT WILL.

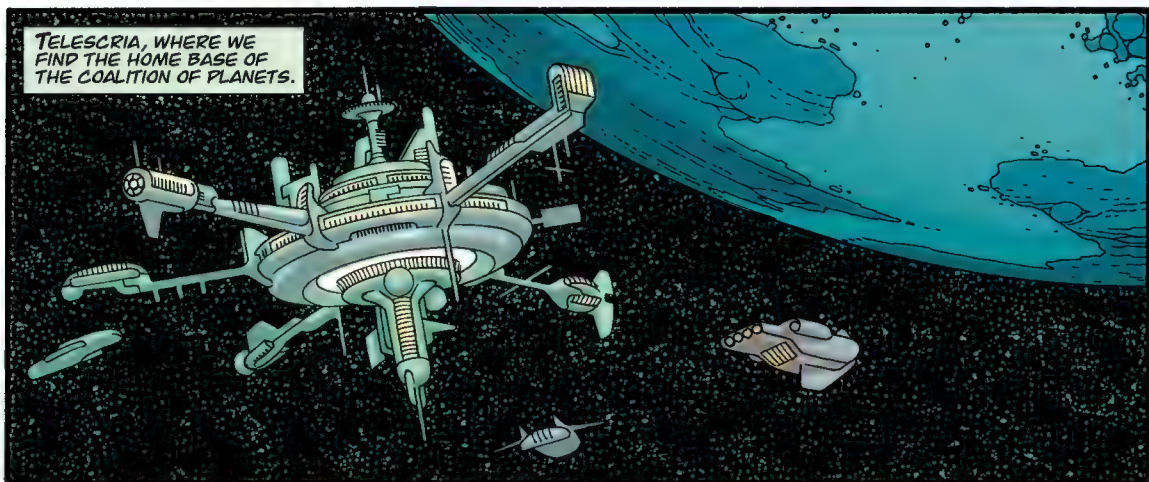












TELESCRIA, WHERE WE FIND THE HOME BASE OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS.



IT'S NOT A TOTAL LOSS. WE KNOW WHERE THEY ARE--AND THEY'RE ACTIVE AGAIN. WE COULD DISTRACT A SQUAD OF VILTRUMITES BY SENDING THEM THERE... AND I'M NOT COMPLETELY RULING OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CAPTURING SOME TO TRAIN IN SOME WAY.

WE'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO SUCCEED EVERY SINGLE TIME.

THE SAME SHORT-TEMPERED BLOOD RUNS THROUGH MY VEINS AS WELL, NOLAN. YOU SHOWED GREAT RESTRAINT OUT THERE.

I'M SORRY MY PEOPLE SCREWED THIS ONE UP.

BEST NOT TO BRING IT UP.

SERIOUSLY.

THANKFULLY, THERE ARE FAR MORE POTENTIAL WEAPONS LISTED IN YOUR BOOKS... AND A FEW THINGS I'D LIKE YOU TO LOOK INTO THAT YOU DIDN'T WRITE ABOUT.

YOU HAVE A LONG ROAD AHEAD OF YOU.

THE KLAXUS PLANT IS **POISONOUS** TO VILTRUMITES. IT CAN'T KILL US--BUT IT WOULD MAKE US PRETTY EASY TO DEFEAT IN AN OTHERWISE EVENLY MATCHED FIGHT.

THE PROBLEM IS THE PLANT IS **IMPOSSIBLE** TO KEEP FROM GROWING. IT NEEDS VERY LITTLE WATER OR SUNLIGHT AND GROWS AT AN INSANELY RAPID RATE.

SO... WE INFESTED THIS PLANET WITH THESE SINLAK BEETLES, WHICH EAT THE PLANT FASTER THAN IT CAN GROW--AND ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO EXTERMINATE.

MAYBE WE CAN EXTRACT SOME OF THE POISON FROM PLANT MATERIAL INGESTED BY THE BEETLE...

IT IS TRUE, WE WERE ABLE TO FEND OFF THE VILTRUMITE SPONSORED KRESH INVASION OF GELDARIA.

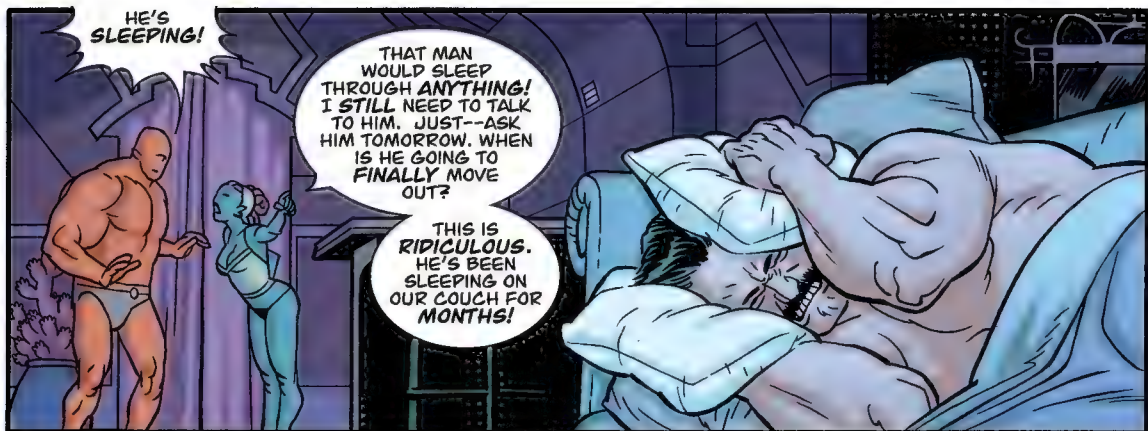
THERE IS ONE THAT MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE TO YOU.*

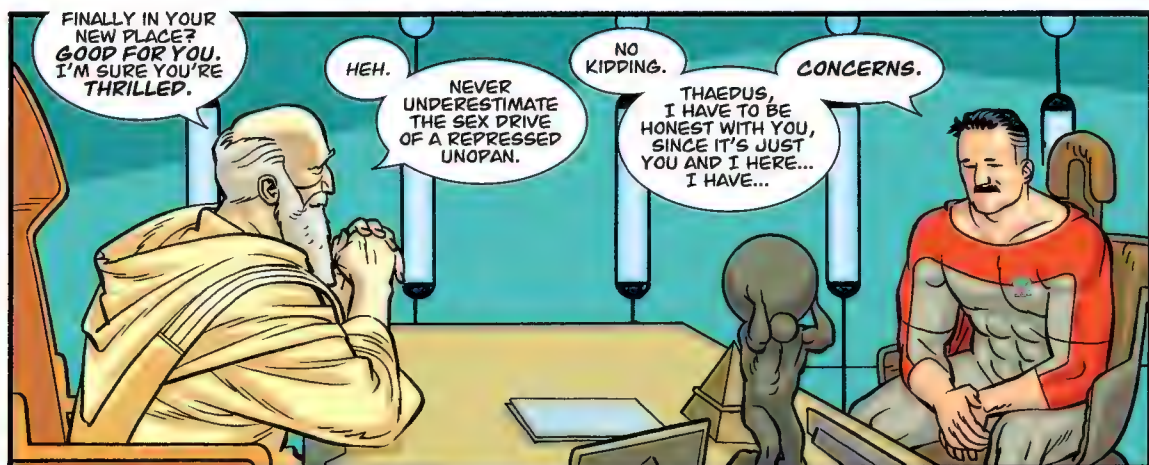
THEIR OLD MIGRATION PATHS CAME RIGHT THROUGH THIS SPOT ON THE STARMAPS.

IF WE COULD CATCH ONE OF THESE IT WOULD BE A HUGE HELP. **SPACE SHARKS** ARE BAD NEWS.

*HOLY CRAP! HE'S TALKING ABOUT TECH JACKET! YOU SHOULD TOTALLY ORDER THAT TRADE PAPERBACK, DUDE.







FINALLY IN YOUR NEW PLACE? GOOD FOR YOU. I'M SURE YOU'RE THRILLED.

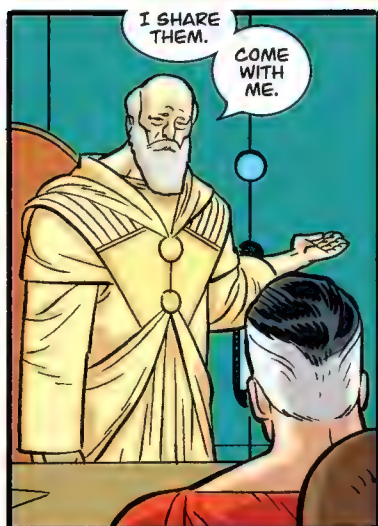
HEH.

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE SEX DRIVE OF A REPRESSED UNOPAN.

NO KIDDING.

THAEDUS, I HAVE TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, SINCE IT'S JUST YOU AND I HERE... I HAVE...

CONCERNS.



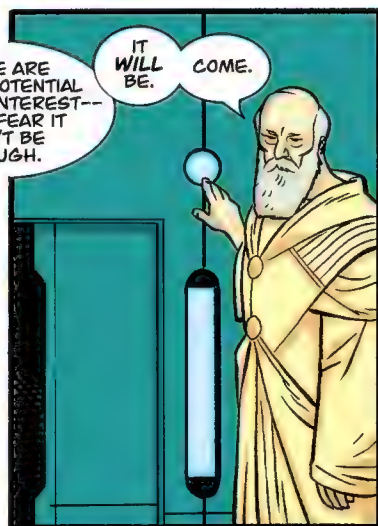
I SHARE THEM.

COME WITH ME.



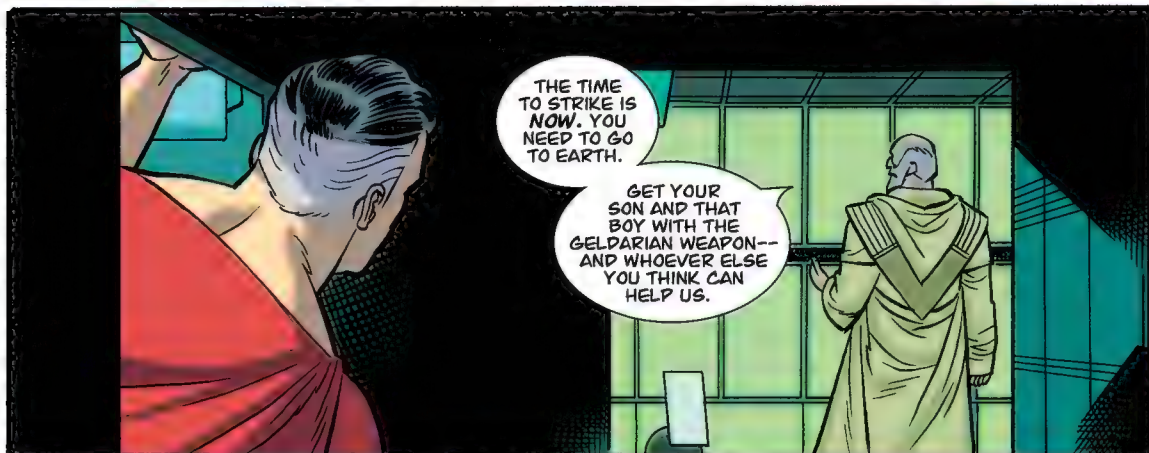
WE HAVE SPACE RACER WORKING WITH US. WE WERE ABLE TO EXTRACT A DILUTED SAMPLE OF THE KLAXUS POISON FROM THE SINTAK BEETLE.

THERE ARE OTHER POTENTIAL ITEMS OF INTEREST-- BUT I FEAR IT WON'T BE ENOUGH.



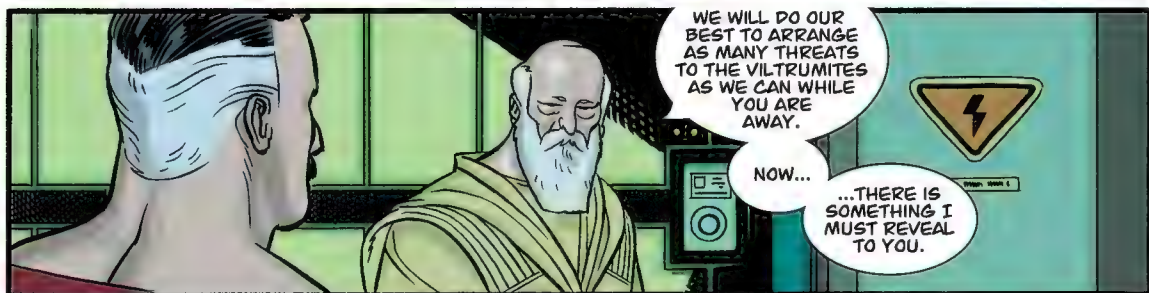
IT WILL BE.

COME.



THE TIME TO STRIKE IS NOW. YOU NEED TO GO TO EARTH.

GET YOUR SON AND THAT BOY WITH THE GELDARIAN WEAPON-- AND WHOEVER ELSE YOU THINK CAN HELP US.



WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO ARRANGE AS MANY THREATS TO THE VILTRUMITES AS WE CAN WHILE YOU ARE AWAY.

NOW...

...THERE IS SOMETHING I MUST REVEAL TO YOU.

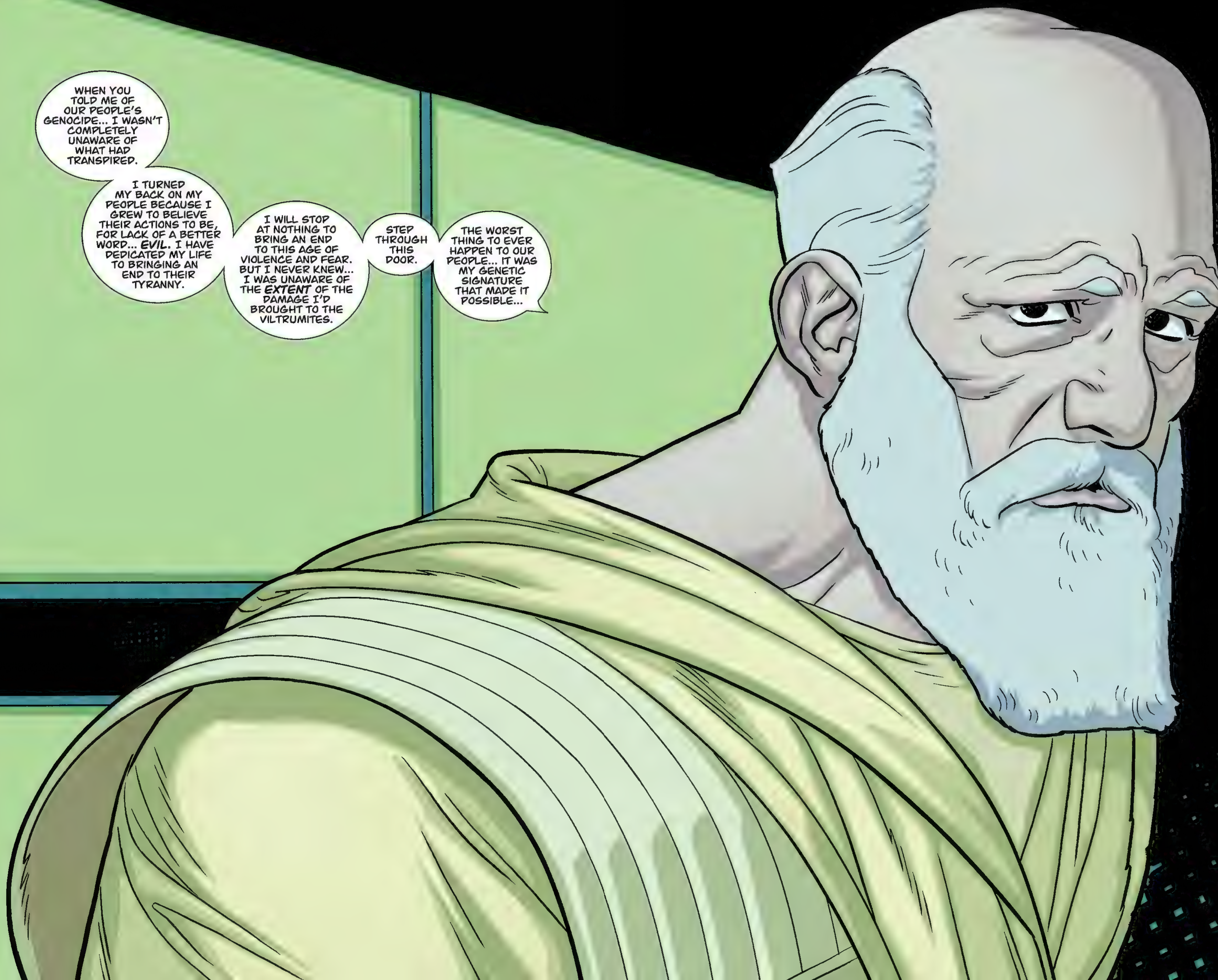
WHEN YOU
TOLD ME OF
OUR PEOPLE'S
GENOCIDE... I WASN'T
COMPLETELY
UNAWARE OF
WHAT HAD
TRANSPIRED.

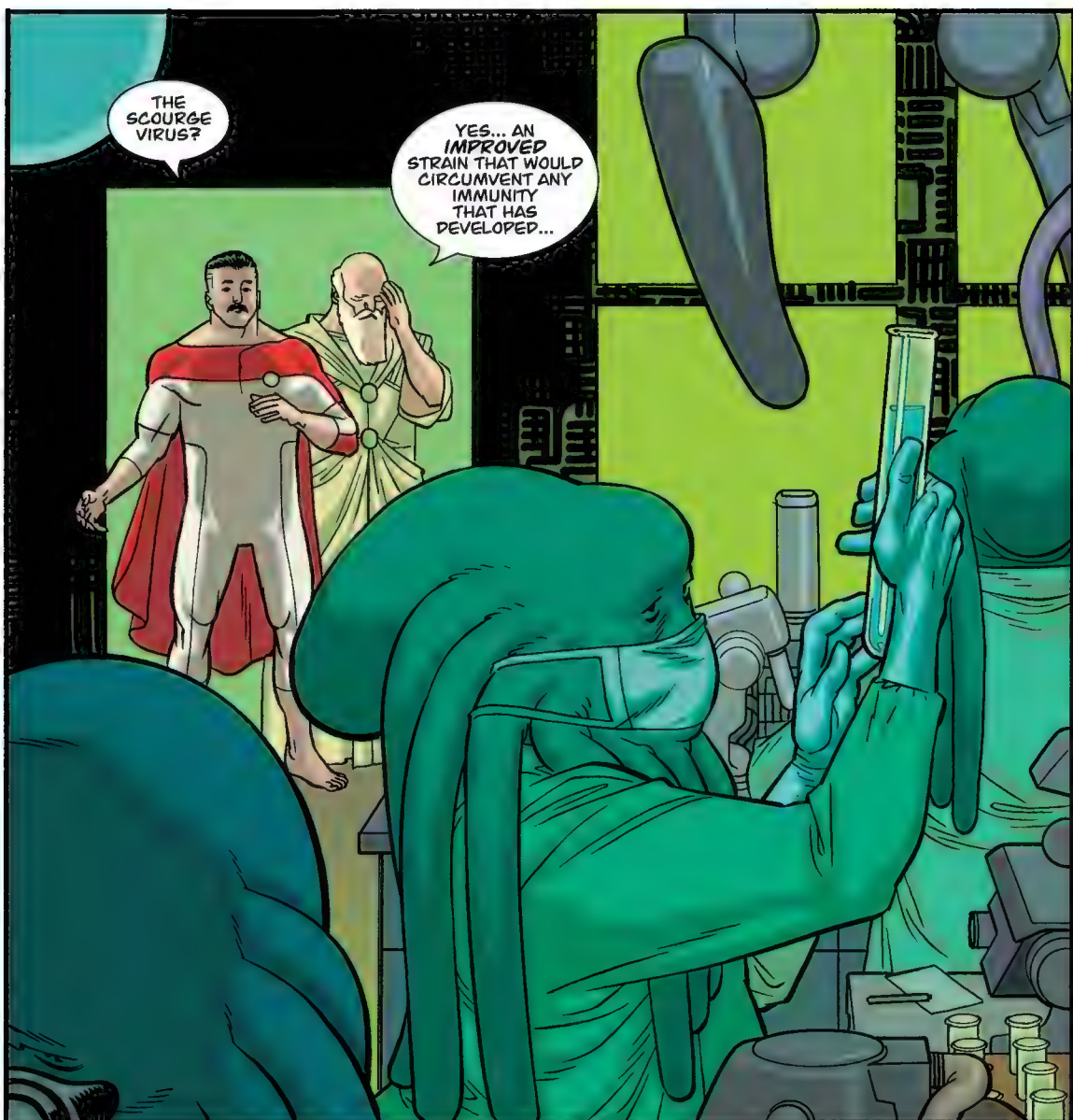
I TURNED
MY BACK ON MY
PEOPLE BECAUSE I
GREW TO BELIEVE
THEIR ACTIONS TO BE,
FOR LACK OF A BETTER
WORD... EVIL. I HAVE
DEDICATED MY LIFE
TO BRINGING AN
END TO THEIR
TYRANNY.

I WILL STOP
AT NOTHING TO
BRING AN END
TO THIS AGE OF
VIOLENCE AND FEAR.
BUT I NEVER KNEW...
I WAS UNAWARE OF
THE EXTENT OF THE
DAMAGE I'D
BROUGHT TO THE
VILTRUMITES.

STEP
THROUGH
THIS
DOOR.

THE WORST
THING TO EVER
HAPPEN TO OUR
PEOPLE... IT WAS
MY GENETIC
SIGNATURE
THAT MADE IT
POSSIBLE...







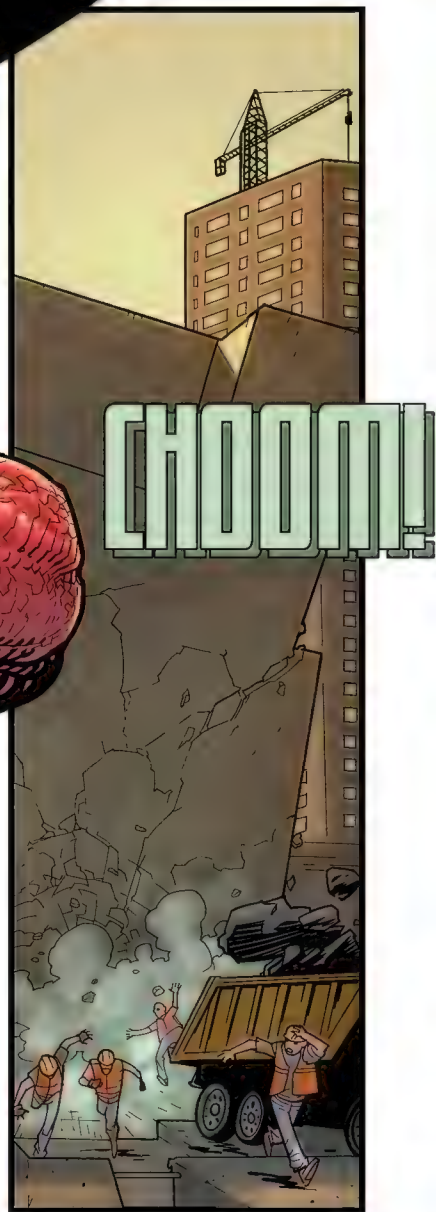
CHAPTER 68

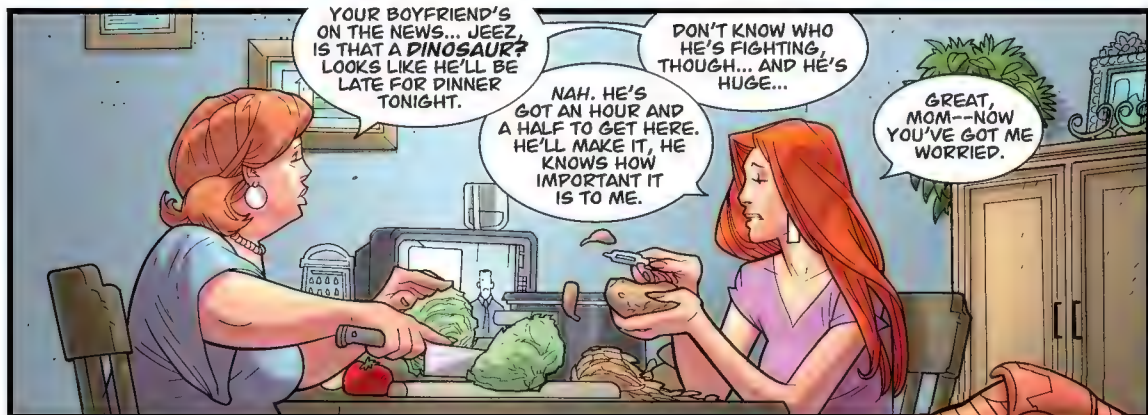
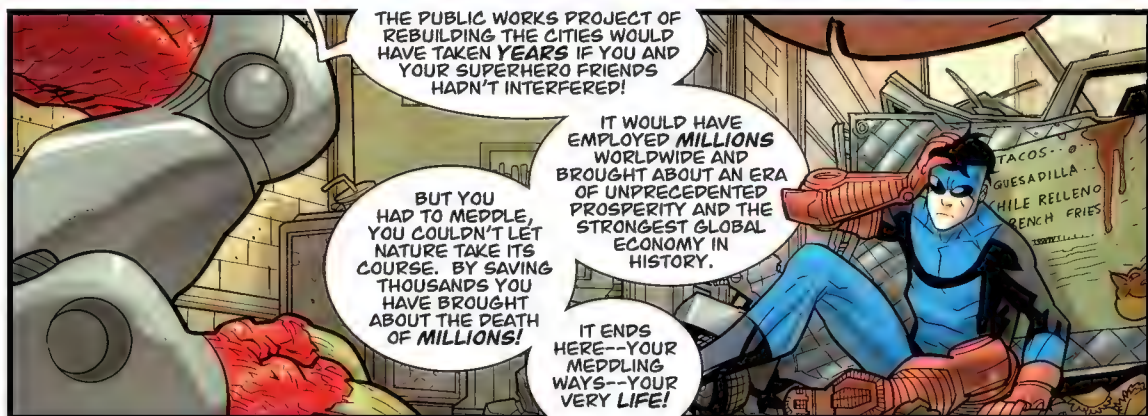
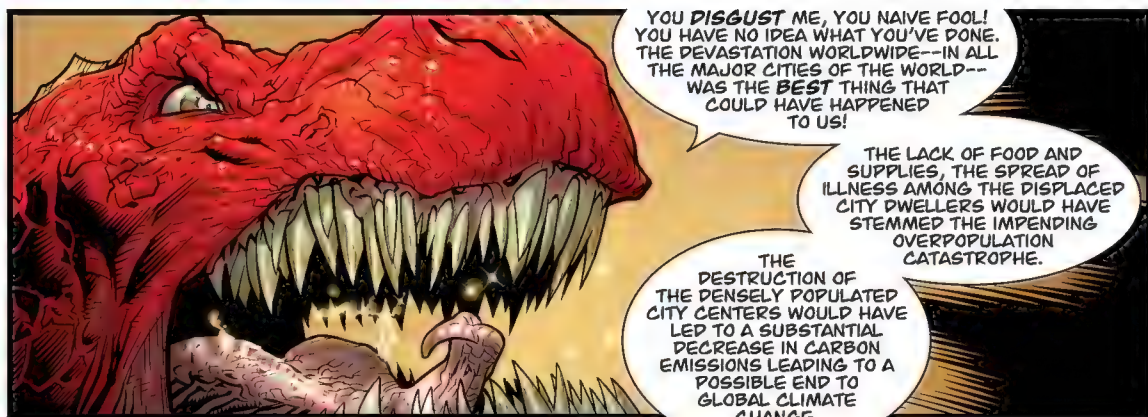


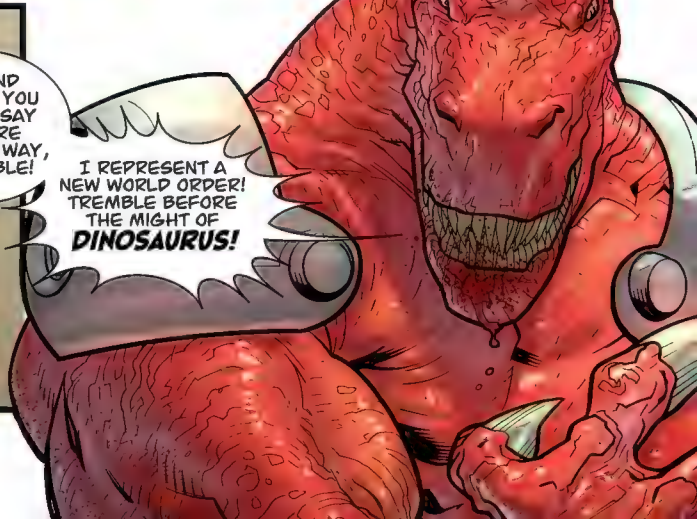


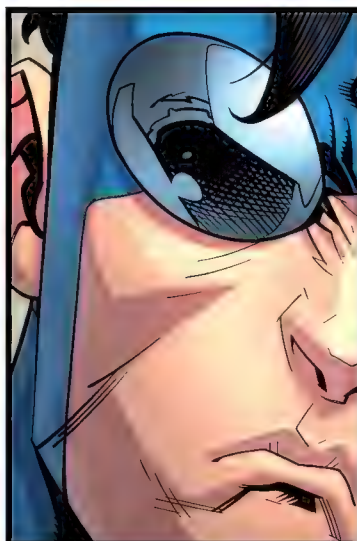
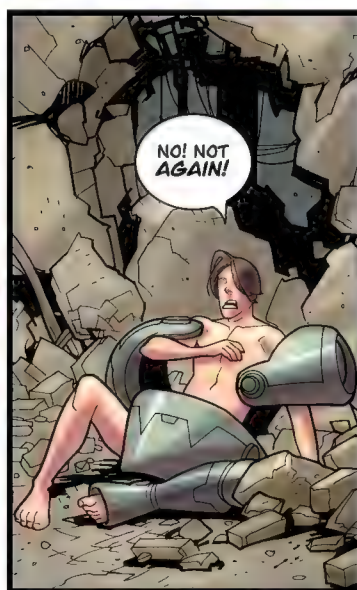
UNGH.

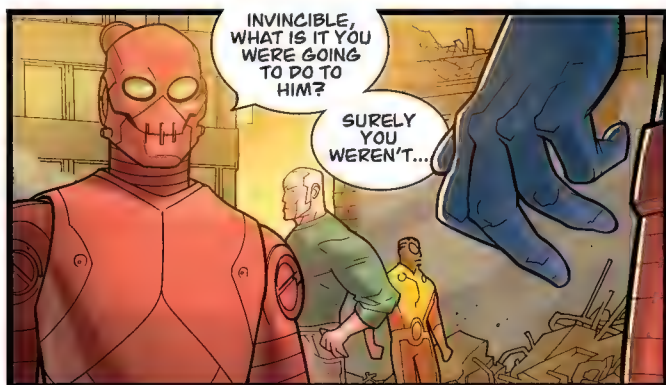
ALMOST
THERE.

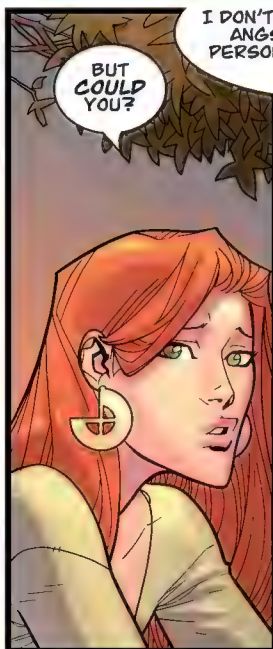
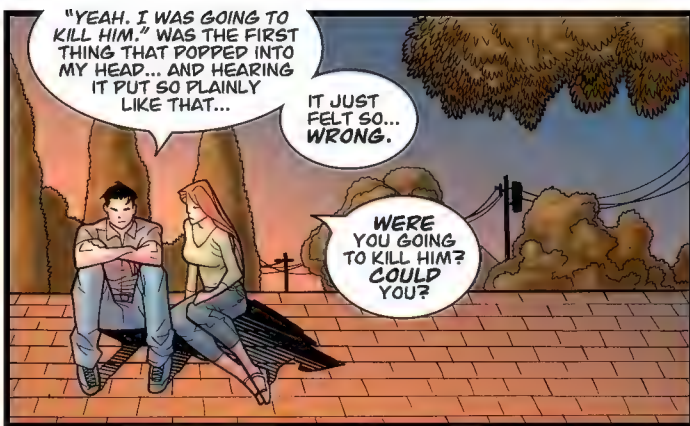
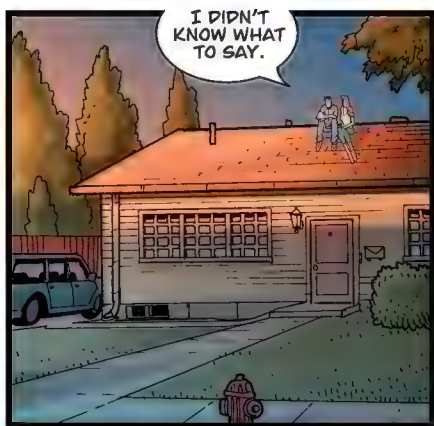


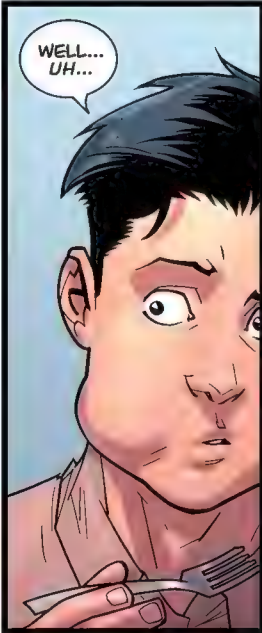
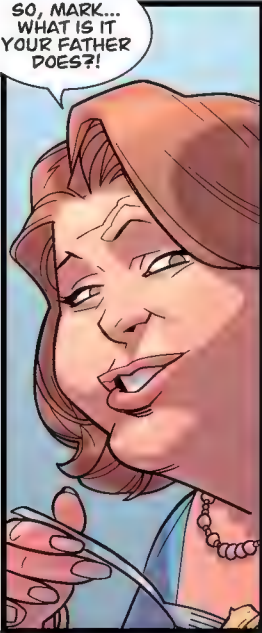
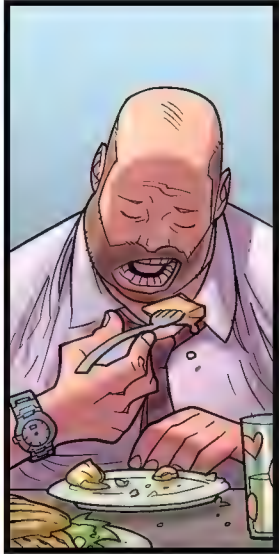
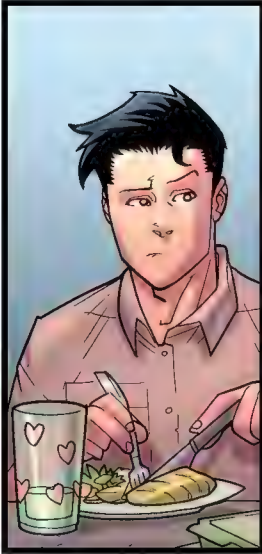
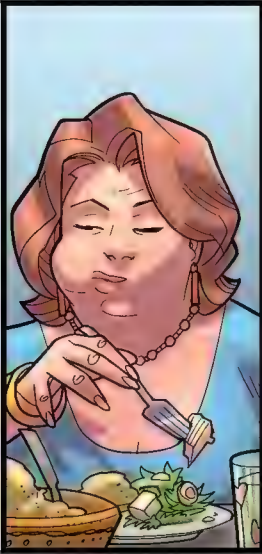
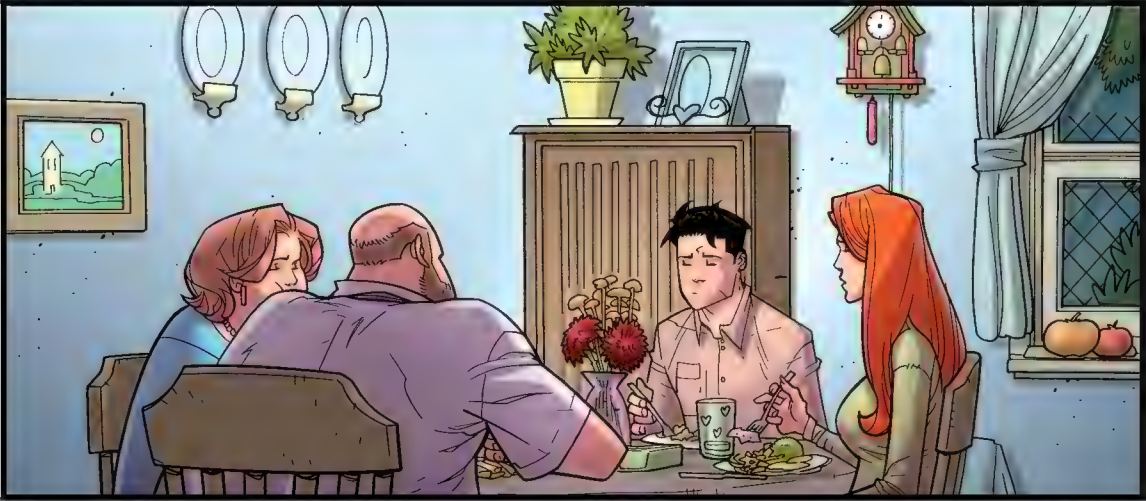


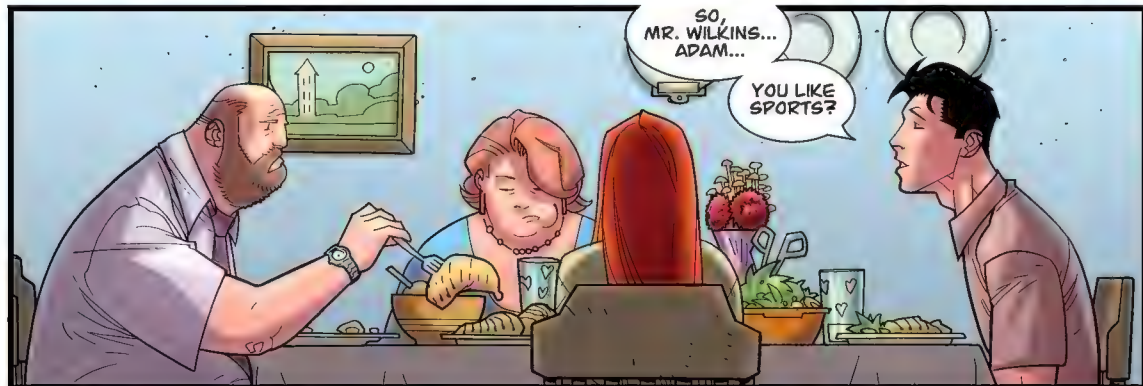
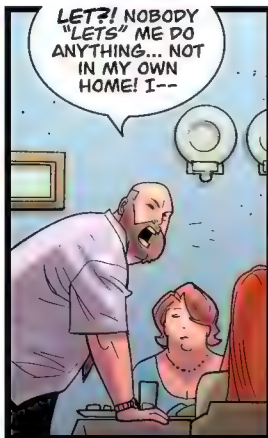


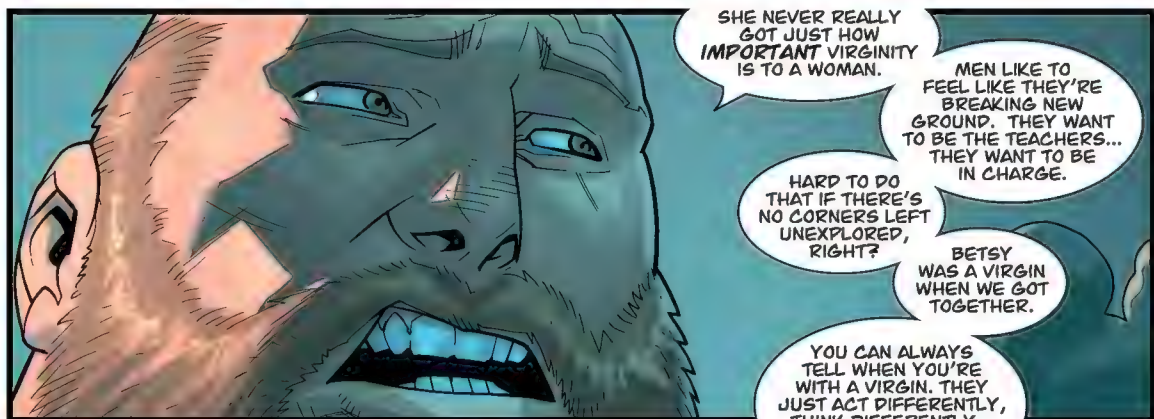


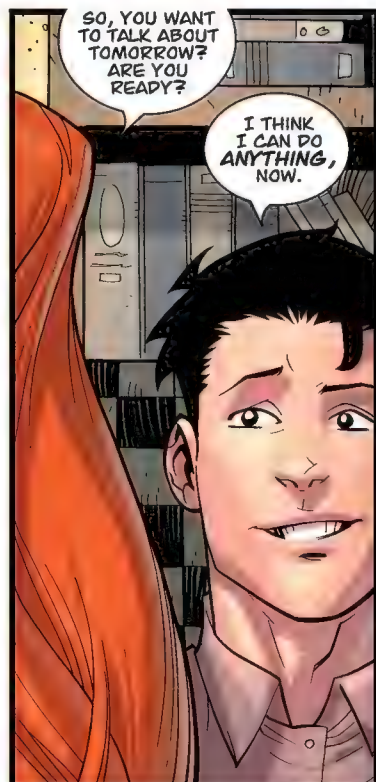
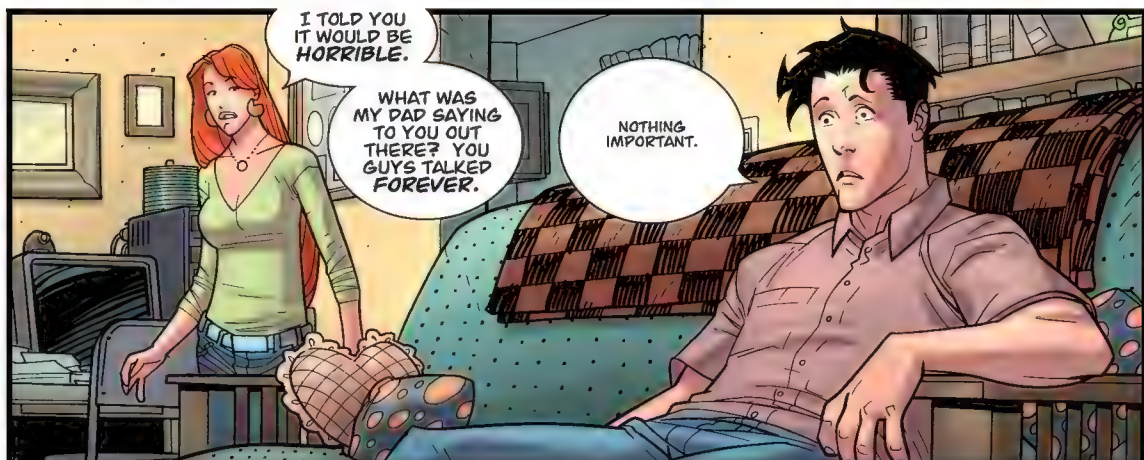
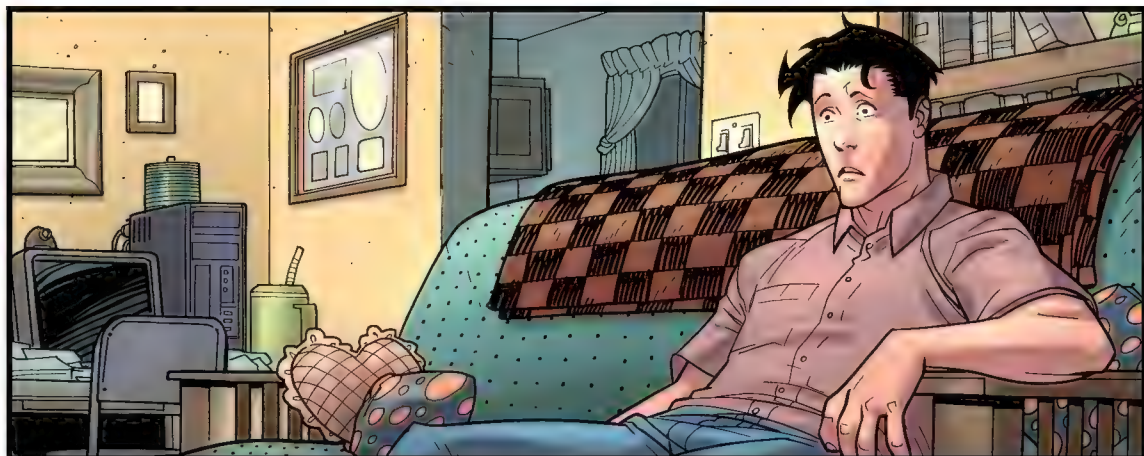


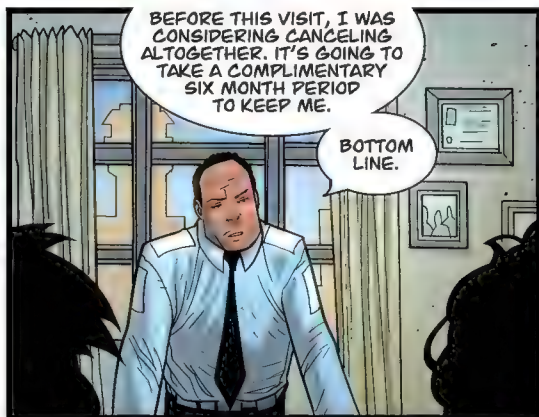
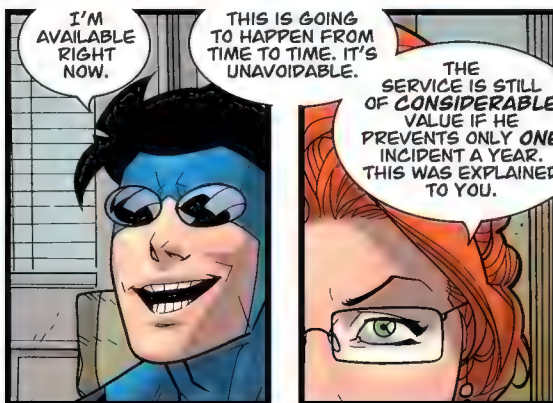
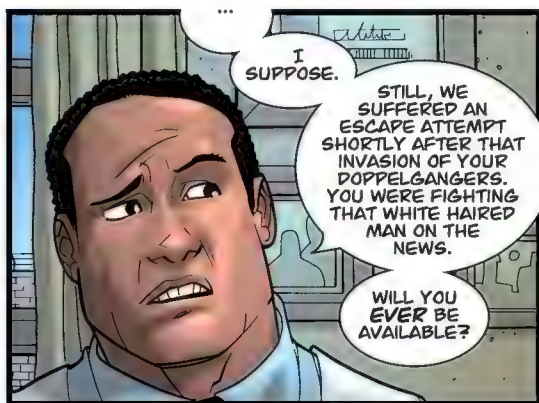














OH, WOW!
THAT WAS
AWESOME! YOU
WERE **AMAZING**
IN THERE!

SOMEONE
HAD TO BE. LORD,
MARK--YOU'RE
SUCH A PUSH OVER.
YOU GIVE HIM SIX
FREE MONTHS AND
WE'LL **NEVER**
HAVE OUR OWN
PLACE!



SORRY.

YOU OKAY
TO FLY? I
MEAN, YOUR
POWERS--?



I WOULDN'T
BE FLYING SO
HIGH IF YOU
WEREN'T RIGHT
HERE. I DON'T
KNOW--THEY
HAVEN'T ACTED
UP IN A FEW
DAYS... MAYBE
THAT'S
OVER.

ONE
CAN ONLY
HOPE...



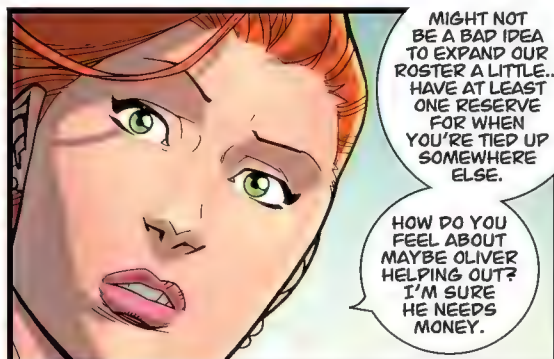
SORRY I
BROUGHT IT
UP. DIDN'T
MEAN TO
UPSET
YOU.

IT'S
OKAY.

THE GOOD
NEWS IS THAT
I'VE GOTTEN SOME
CALLS FROM A FEW
POWER PLANTS
INQUIRING ABOUT
OUR SERVICE.
THIS COULD BE
HUGE.

DO YOU
REALIZE HOW
MUCH WE'LL BE
MAKING IF WE
GET SO MUCH AS
SIX REGULAR
CLIENTS?

NOPE...
BUT AS LONG
AS YOU KNOW,
I'M COOL.



MIGHT NOT
BE A BAD IDEA
TO EXPAND OUR
ROSTER A LITTLE...
HAVE AT LEAST
ONE RESERVE
FOR WHEN
YOU'RE TIED UP
SOMEWHERE
ELSE.

HOW DO YOU
FEEL ABOUT
MAYBE OLIVER
HELPING OUT?
I'M SURE
HE NEEDS
MONEY.



SPEAK
OF THE
DEVIL...



HEY GUYS--
YOU HEADED
BACK TO THE
HOUSE?

MOM'S OUT
TONIGHT. FIGURED
YOU MIGHT... WELL...
WANT TO KNOW
YOU HAVE THE
HOUSE ALL TO
YOURSELF.

Y'KNOW...
SEX.



CUTE.

WHOA,
MAN--NICE
COSTUME. I
LIKE IT. WHAT
BROUGHT
THAT ON?



I JUST WENT A
FEW ROUNDS WITH
THE ELEPHANT.
HE RIPPED MY
COSTUME
UP.

YOU
FOUGHT
HIM BEFORE,
RIGHT?



SEEMS LIKE I HAVE...
I DON'T REALLY
REMEMBER. MAYBE
ONCE.



WELL, ANYWAY, MY
COSTUME GOT ALL
RIPPED UP. I WENT
TO ART FOR A FIX AND
HE SAID "YOU'RE
GETTING A LITTLE
OLD FOR THE
EXPOSED LEG
BIT."



I
AGREED--
AND THEN
PRESTO
CHANGO--

--YOUNG
OMNI-MAN
IS BORN!



WELL, I'M GOING
BACK OUT ON
PATROL--YOU GUYS
HAVE FUN BACK AT
THE HOUSE.

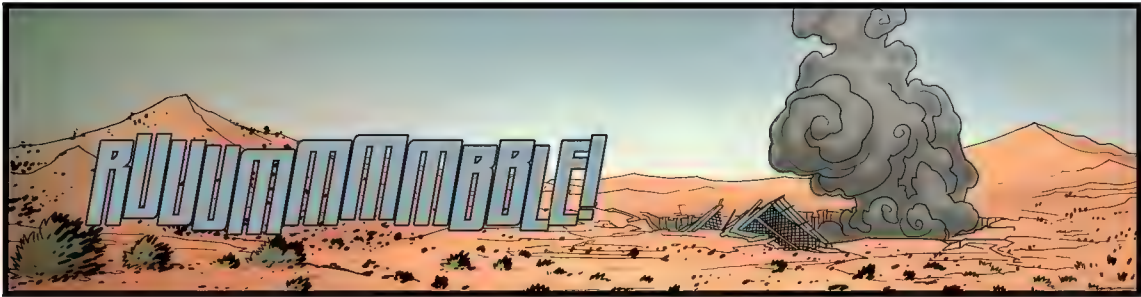
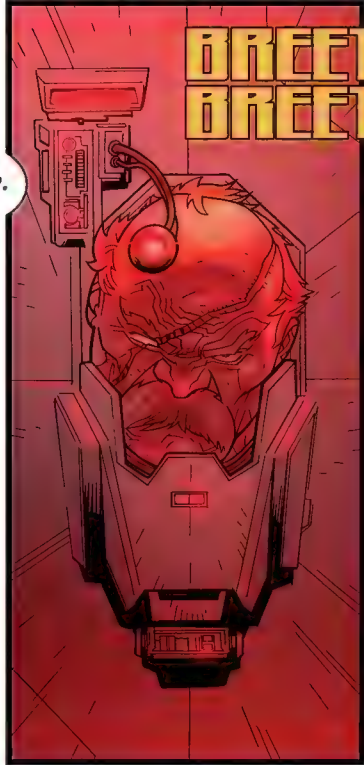
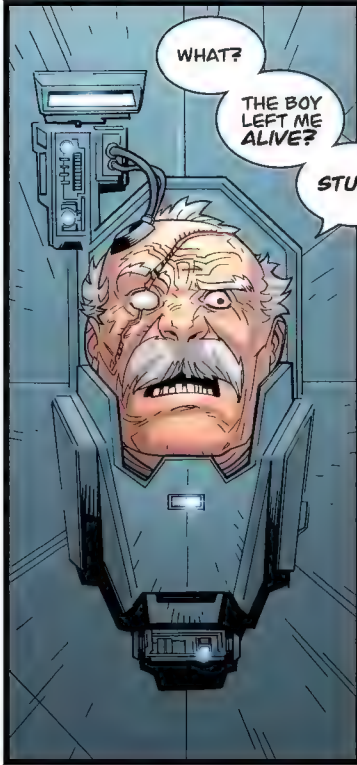
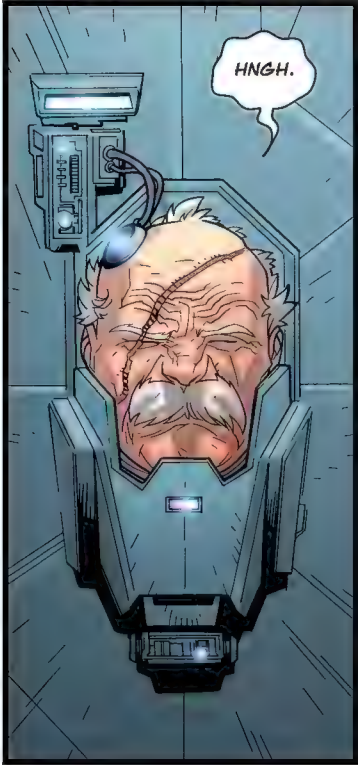

WINK.

RUDE.

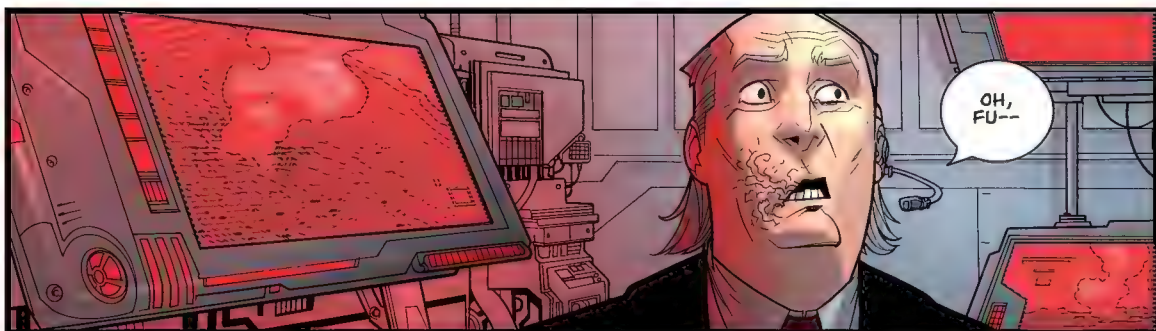
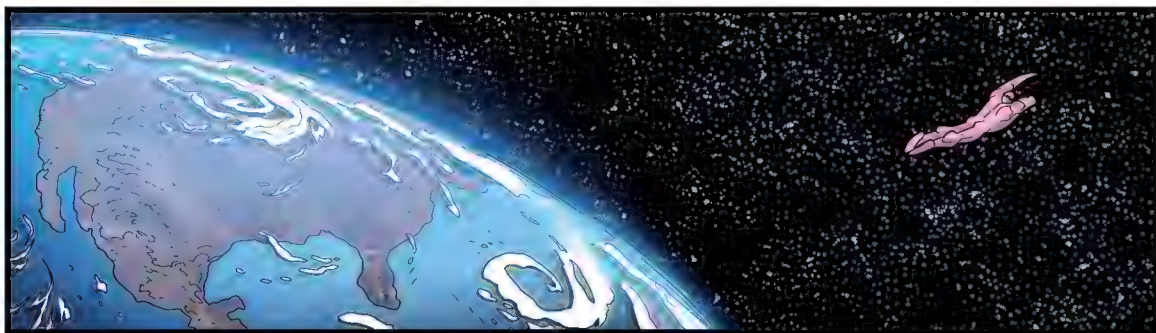
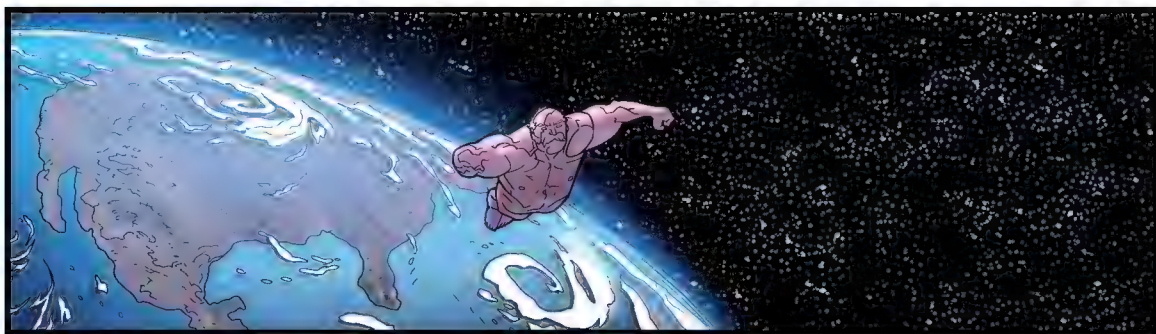
EH... HE'S
NOT WRONG,
THOUGH.

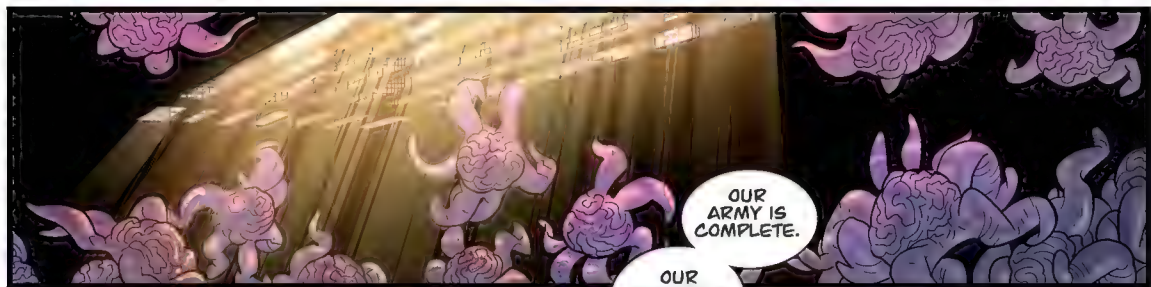
HOUSE
ALL TO
OURSELVES--
WEE!

THE BLOCK. REMOTE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY OUTPOST IN THE MOJAVE DESERT.







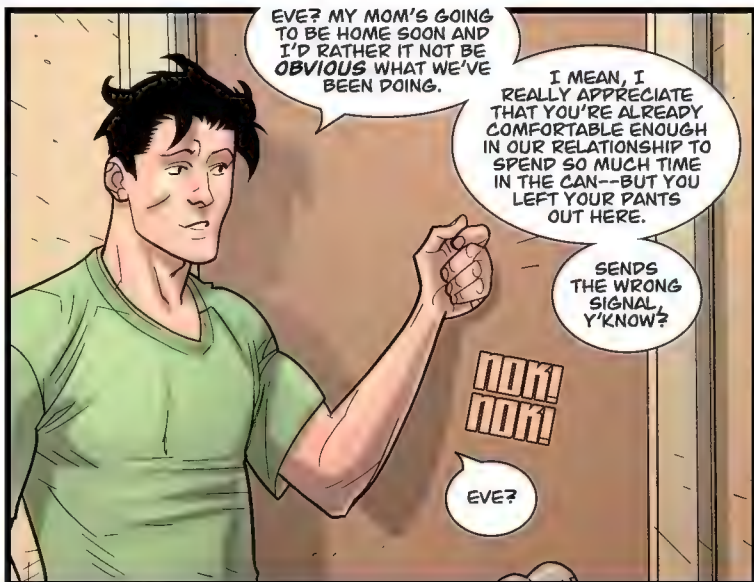
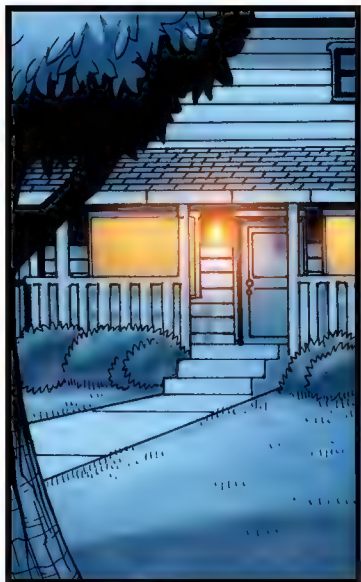


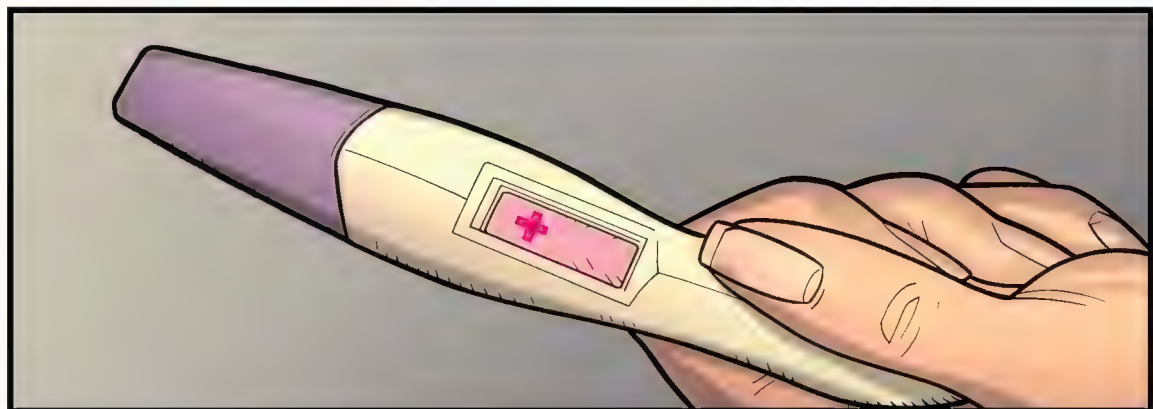
OUR
ARMY IS
COMPLETE.

OUR
GENERALS
ARE IN
PLACE.



THE SEQUID
INVASION OF
EARTH BEGINS
NOW!







CHAPTER 69





**SHE IS UNIVERSA,
WARRIOR QUEEN TO
A FAR OFF WORLD.**

**SHE HAS TRAVELED COUNTLESS
MILES TO THE PLANET EARTH.
HER REASONS FOR DOING SO
WILL PUT THE ENTIRE PLANET
IN JEOPARDY.**

**SHE IS AS DEADLY AS
SHE IS RELENTLESS.**



**SHE WILL NOT STOP--
WILL NOT REST UNTIL
SHE GETS WHAT SHE
HAS COME FOR.**

**THE POPULATION OF THIS
PLANET IS IN GRAVE
DANGER--THEY HAVE NO
CONCEPT OF THE LEVEL OF
THREAT COMING THEIR WAY.**

BECAUSE THE PEOPLE OF EARTH HAVE FAR MORE PRESSING CONCERNS AT THE MOMENT.

KR000M!

WR00M!

HEAR ME, HUMAN RACE!
IT IS TIME TO MEET YOUR NEW MASTERS!

TOGETHER WE WILL FORM A NEW RACE--A NEW CIVILIZATION. WE WILL LIVE TOGETHER AS ONE--A NEW COMBINED RACE OF HUMAN AND SEQUID!

EMBRACE US OR DIE!

THE PEOPLE OF EARTH DO NOT LIVE IN A CONSTANT STATE OF FEAR. WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN ALIEN INVASIONS, ENTIRE CITIES LEVELED AND VILLAINS WHO THREATEN ALL LIFE ON EARTH...

THESE ATTACKS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN. THERE ARE DAYS, WEEKS, EVEN MONTHS OF PEACE.

AND EVEN ON DAYS WHEN THERE IS AN ATTACK OF SOME KIND, ON SOME LARGE SCALE, IT IS MOST OFTEN AN ISOLATED EVENT, AFFECTING ONE AREA, EASILY HANDLED BY ONE COSTUMED HERO.

IT IS A RARE OCCASION THAT TWO THREATS, OF SIMILAR MAGNITUDE, WOULD SOMEHOW OCCUR ON THE SAME DAY...

...BUT THIS IS ONE
OF THOSE DAYS.





ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'VE BEEN ACTING... DISTANT SINCE LAST NIGHT. I SWEAR MY MOM HAS NO CLUE YOU SPENT THE NIGHT.

SHE WAS OUT SUPER-LATE--PROBABLY STILL ASLEEP. IT'S COOL ANYWAY, I DOUBT SHE'D CARE.

EVE?

I'M OKAY.

I'M JUST TIRED... UM...

...AND WORRIED ABOUT MY POWERS.

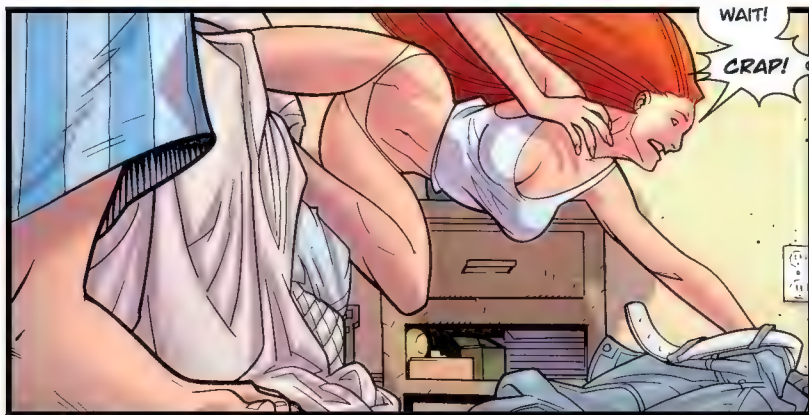
BUT YOU HAVEN'T HAD ANY MORE PROBLEMS WITH THEM, RIGHT? I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE A ONE TIME THING.

DID SOMETHING ELSE--

BREET! BREET!

WHAT IS THAT?

I DON'T KNOW. WHERE IS IT COMING FROM?



WAIT!

CRAP!



CRAP!

CRAP!

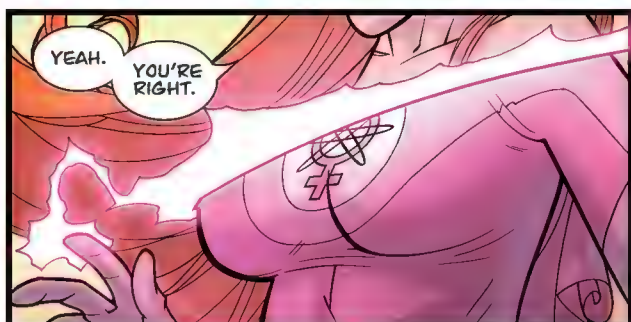
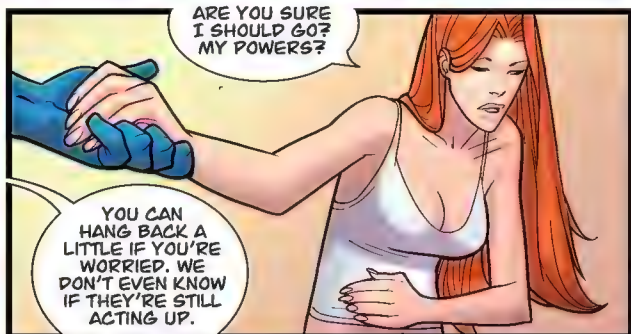
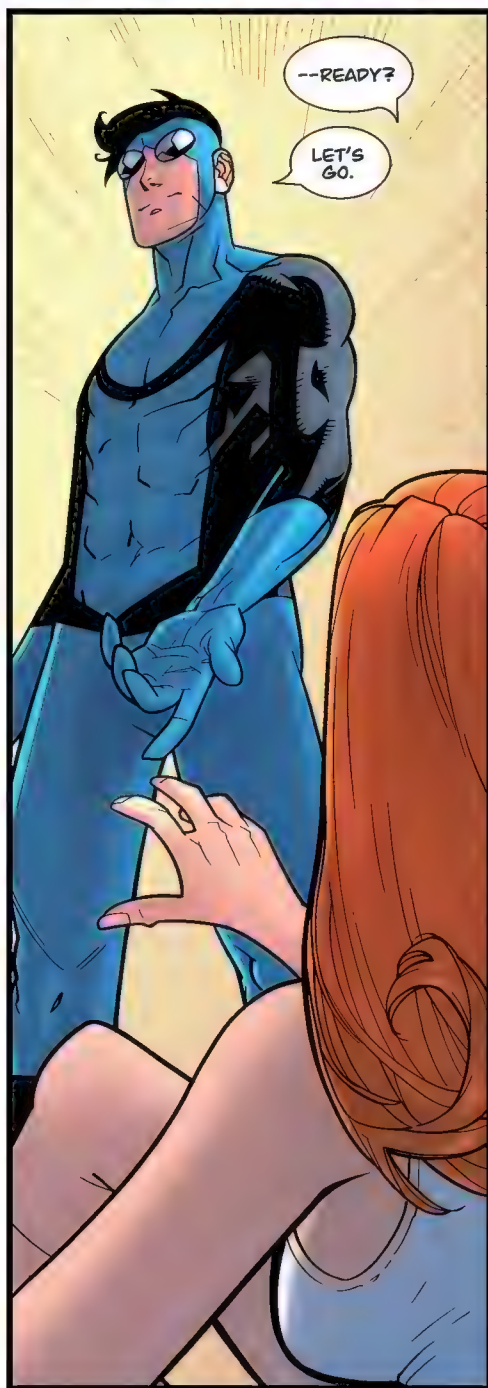
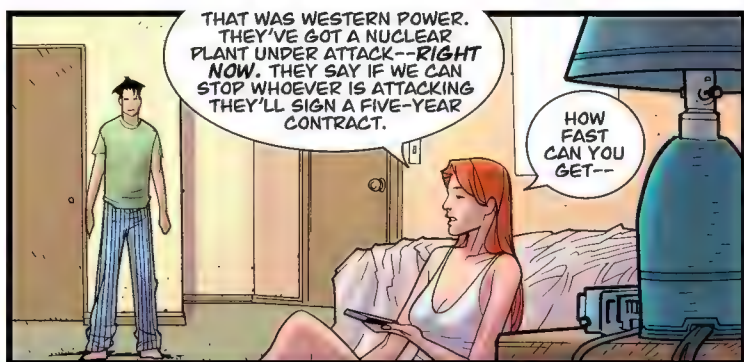
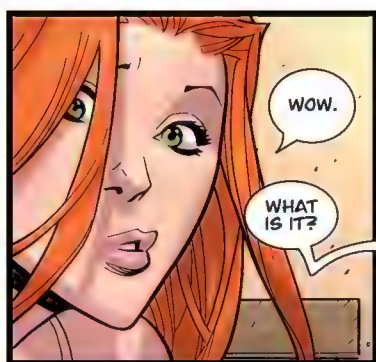


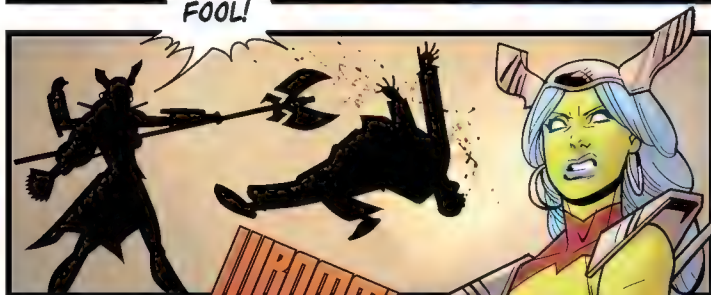
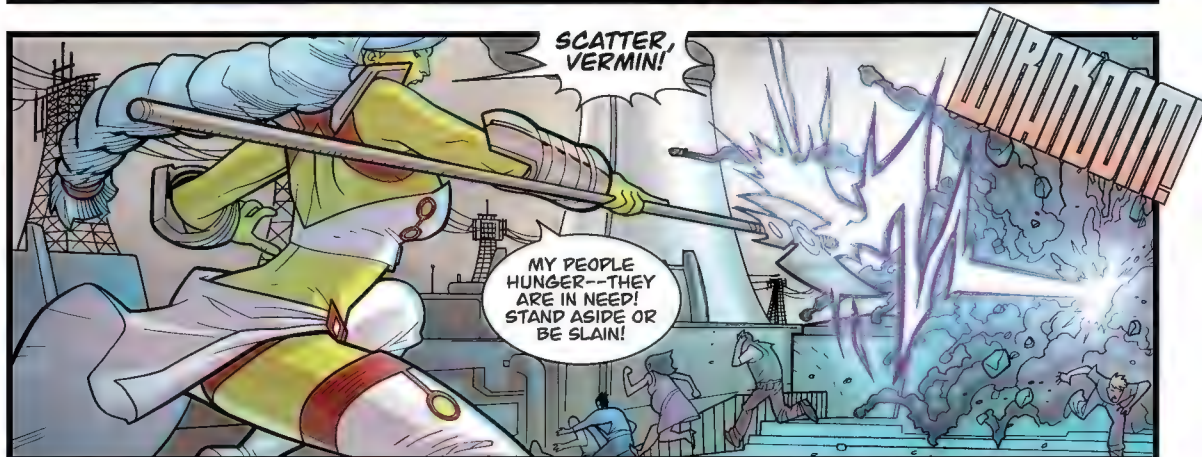
HI--INVINCIBLE INCORPORATED. HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

RIGHT NOW?

OKAY. NO, WE CAN HANDLE THAT.

WE'RE ON OUR WAY.







CAN I PRESUME TO TELL UNIVERSA TO BE A LITTLE KINDER TO THE NATIVES?

SERIOUSLY.

UNCOOL.

I'LL CLEAR THE AREA--YOU DEAL WITH THE PRETTY, PRETTY PRINCESS.



I WILL LET NO ONE STAND IN MY WAY!

THRAKDOOM!

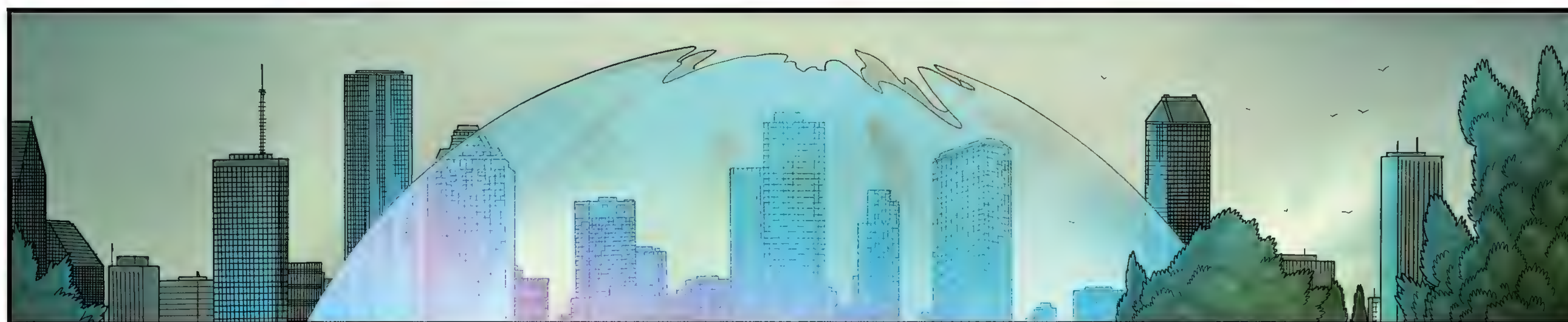
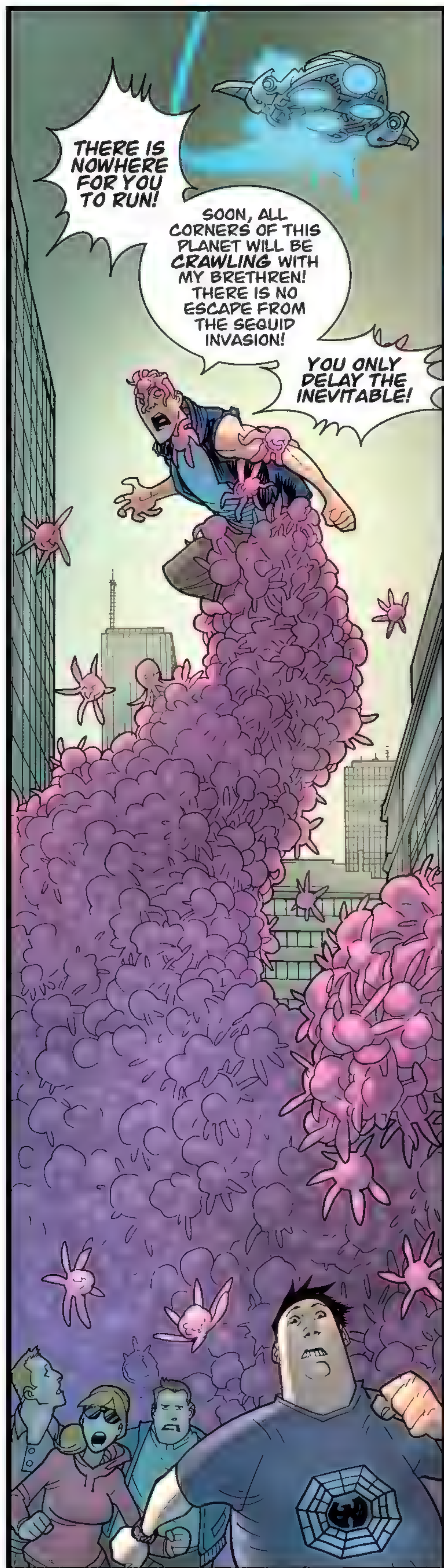
OKAY, COOL-- LET'S DIVE RIGHT IN.

TALKING IS OVERRATED.



MY WORLD IS EIGHT TIMES THE SIZE OF YOURS. THE AMOUNT OF POWER I NEED TO PREVENT A GLOBAL EXTINCTION WILL DRAIN THIS PLANET DRY.





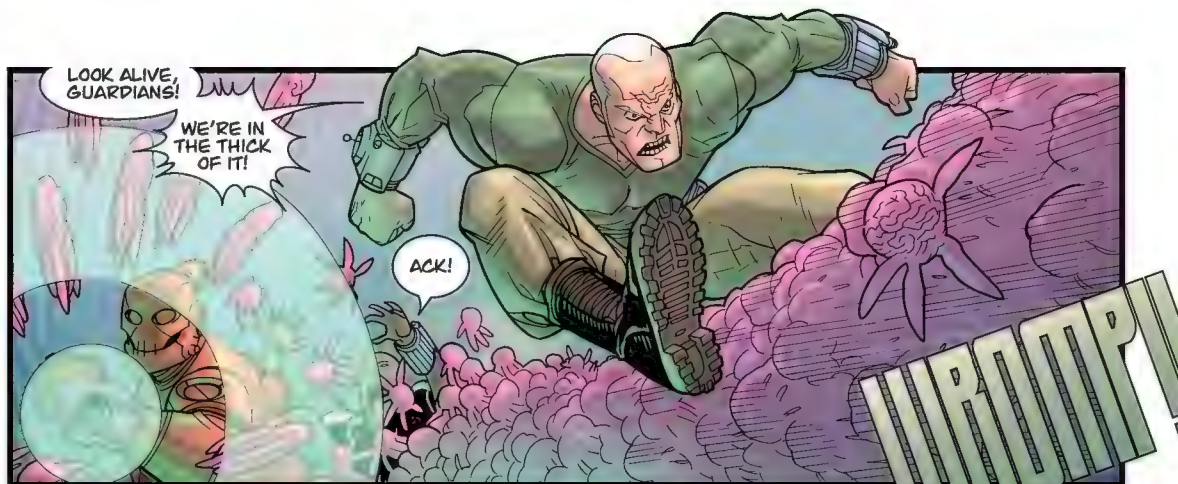


WE HAVE
TO WORK
FAST,
PEOPLE!

PRIORITY
ONE IS REMOVING
PEOPLE FROM THE
CONTAINMENT ZONE.
HIT THEM WITH THE
DARTS AND THEY'RE
TELEPORTED AWAY. THERE
ARE **THOUSANDS** OF
PEOPLE LEFT UNDER
THIS DOME--WE DON'T
GET THEM ALL--THE
SEGUIDS REMAIN
LINKED.

AS LONG
AS THEY HAVE
AT LEAST **ONE**
HOST TO ATTACH
THEMSELVES TO
THEIR MINDS
REMAIN LINKED--
NO HOST,
AND THEY'RE
MINDLESS
DRONES.

I DON'T
THINK I
HAVE TO TELL
YOU WHAT
HAPPENS IF
WE FAIL.





WHOOOM!



OW!



SERIOUSLY...

OW.



SURRENDER
YOUR PLANET'S
ENERGY TO
ME.

YOU ARE
BEATEN.



BEATEN?
I SAID
"OW."

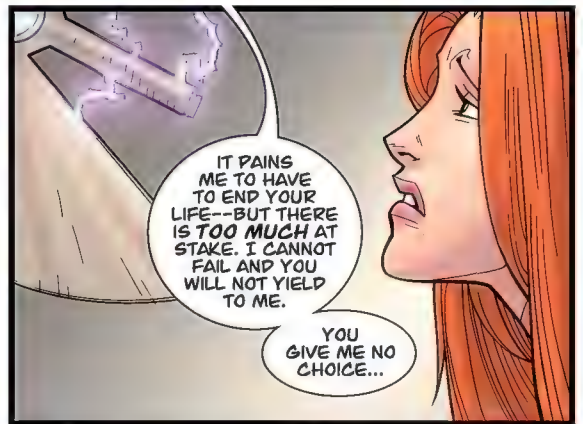
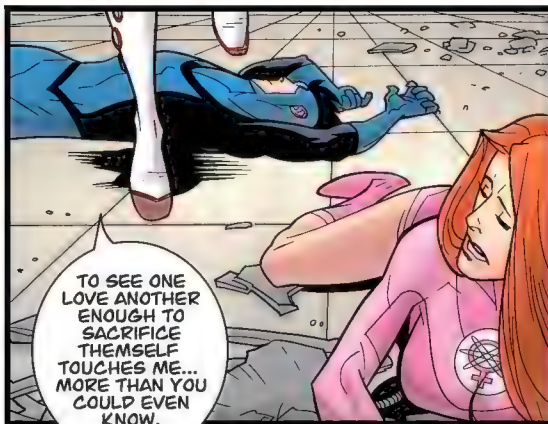
I NEVER
SAID ANYTHING
ABOUT BEING
BEATEN.

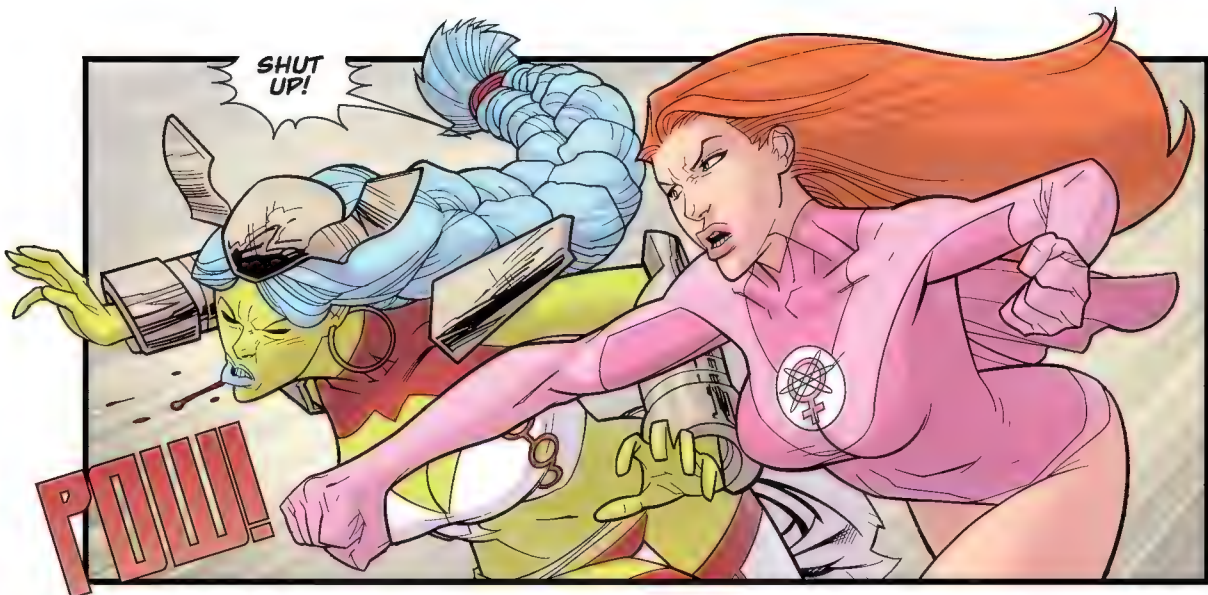


SEE?

WHOOOM!










ALL
TOO
EASY!



CHAPTER 70





YOUR
SACRIFICE
TODAY SUCCEEDS
ONLY IN SETTING
AN EXAMPLE TO
OTHERS WHO MAY
OPPOSE US.

THE SEQUID
RULE OF EARTH
IS UPON YOU--
ACCEPT YOUR
FATE OR
DIE!

KEEP
RANTING...

WARRA
KUKT!

LET THIS
BE A LESSON
TO ALL WHO
OPPOSE THIS
NEW WORLD
THAT IS
DAWNING!

WE
ARE YOUR
MASTERS
NOW!

OKAY,
I'M IN.

MY SUIT IS
CLOSING UP--
THE SEQUIDS
SHOULD HAVE
NO IDEA I'M NO
LONGER INSIDE,
I CAN CONTROL
IT FROM
HERE.

EVERYONE,
WAIT FOR MY
SIGNAL.

WE'VE GOT
TO RESUME THE
ATTACK--KEEP
HIM OCCUPIED
WHILE WE
EVACUATE THE
REST OF THE
CIVILIANS.

BOW BEFORE
THE MIGHT OF
THE SEQUID
EMPI--

HUH?





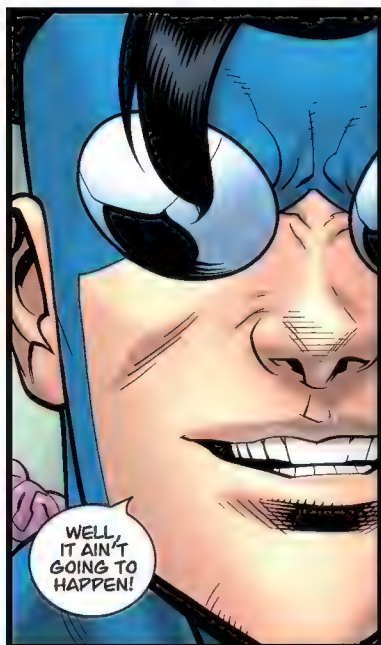
SO YOU'RE WANTING
TO TAKE OVER THIS
PLANET AND THEN
ATTACK MARS... SOME
KIND OF REVENGE
THING?

COMBINING
YOUR RACE WITH
OURS--INCREASING
YOUR NUMBER OF
HOSTS TO A LEVEL
THAT WOULD LEAD
TO YOU NEVER
BEING WITHOUT
ONE...

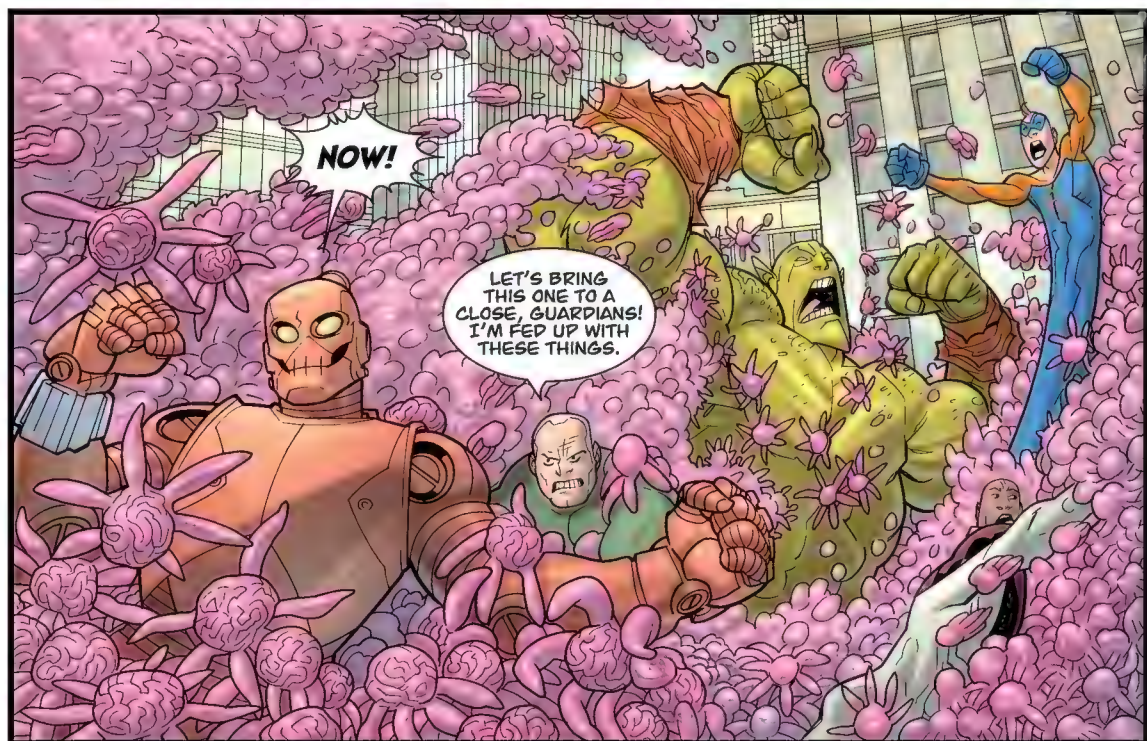
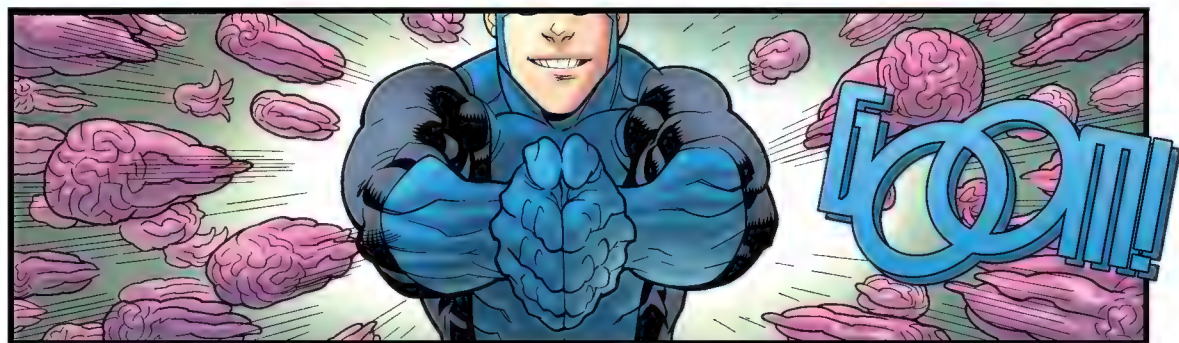
...A NEW
SYMBIOTIC RACE,
ELIMINATING YOUR
WEAKNESS ONCE
AND FOR ALL, YOUR
NEED TO LINK YOUR
MINDS THROUGH THE
CONNECTION OF
AT LEAST ONE
HOST.

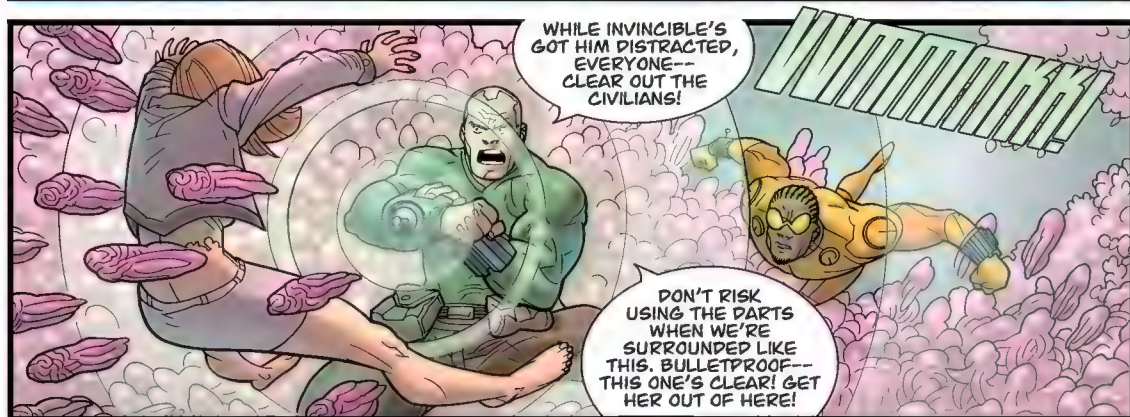
VERY
GOOD.

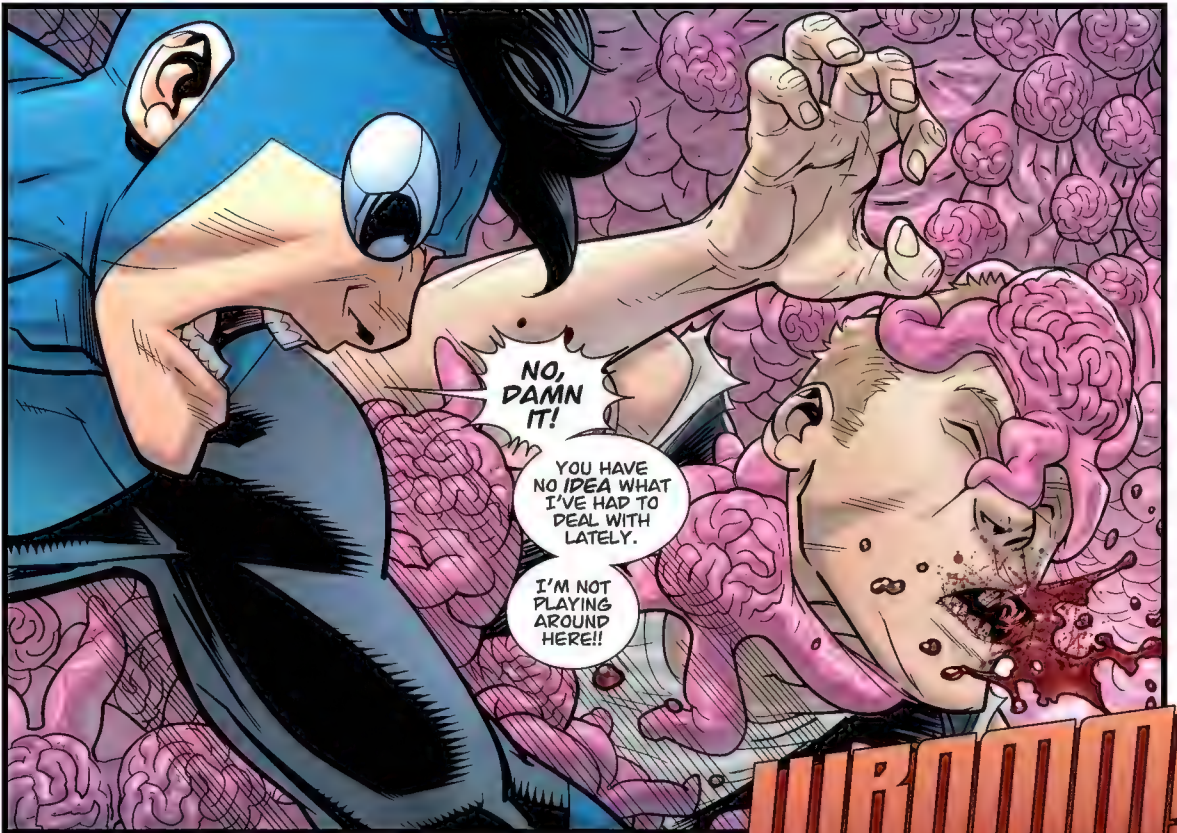
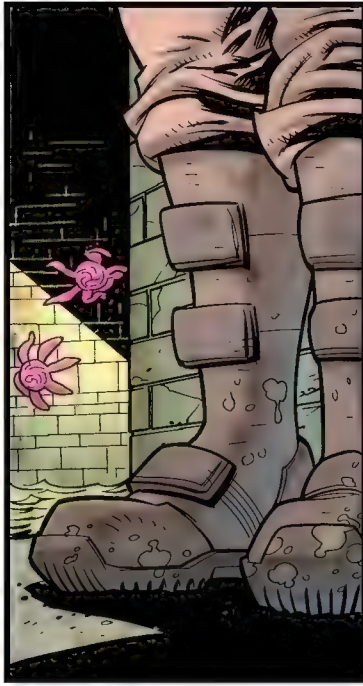
THAT
IS OUR PLAN
EXACTLY.



WELL,
IT AIN'T
GOING TO
HAPPEN!

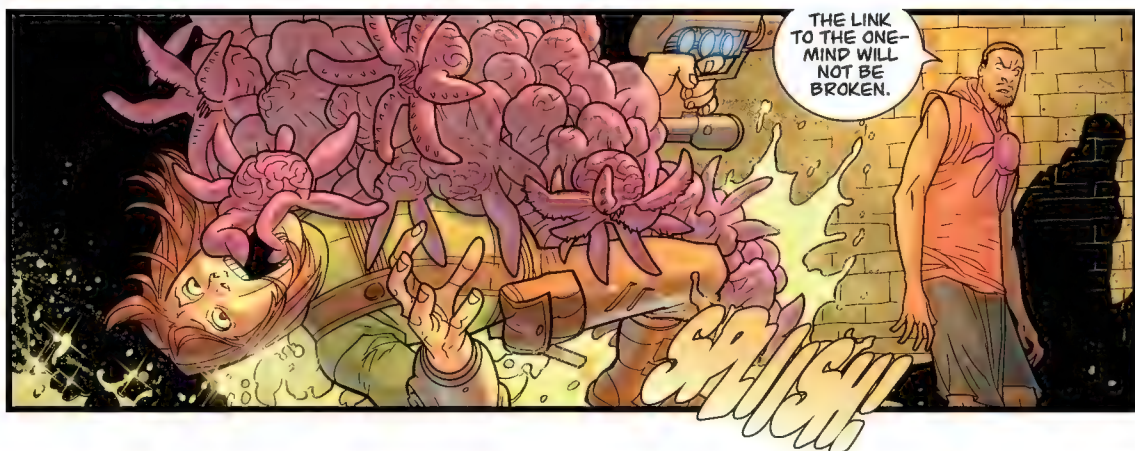


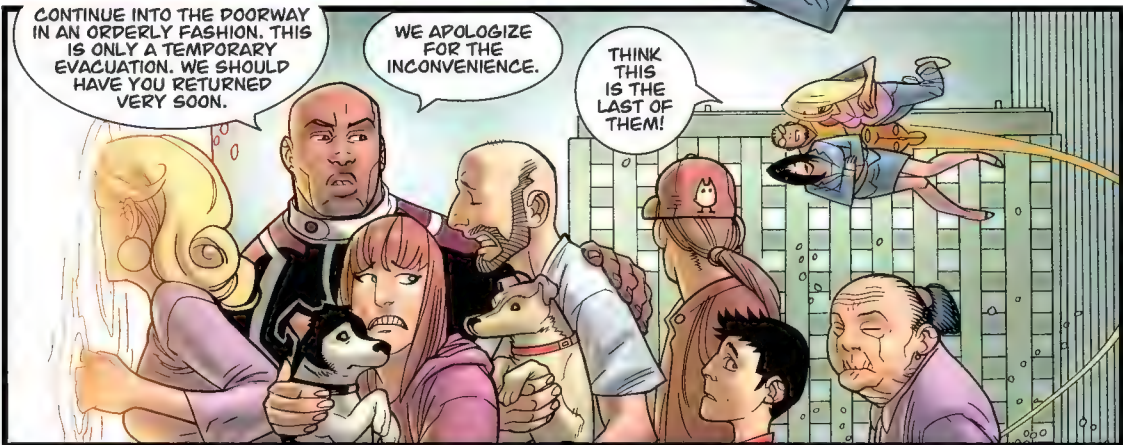
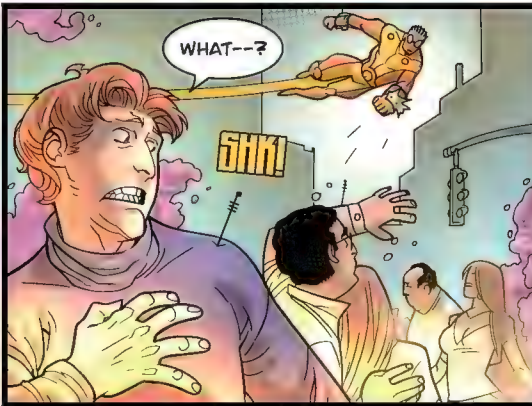
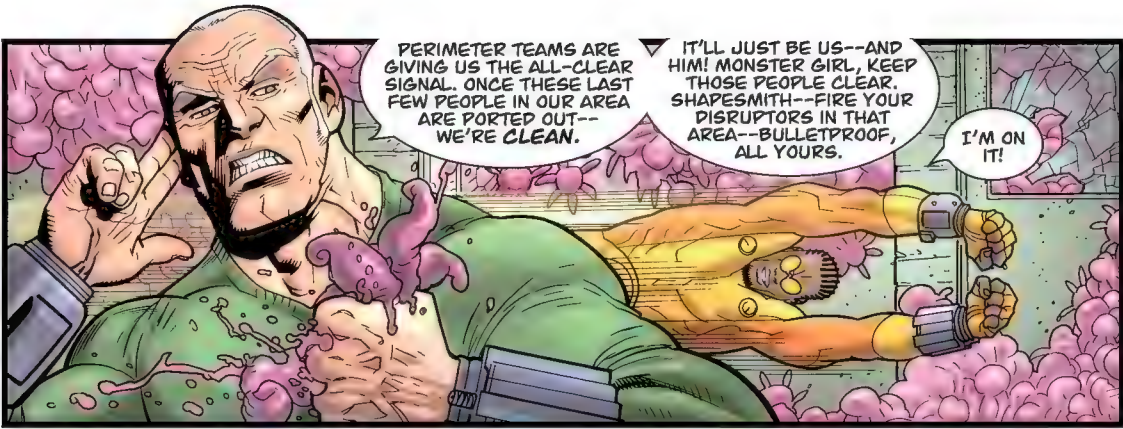


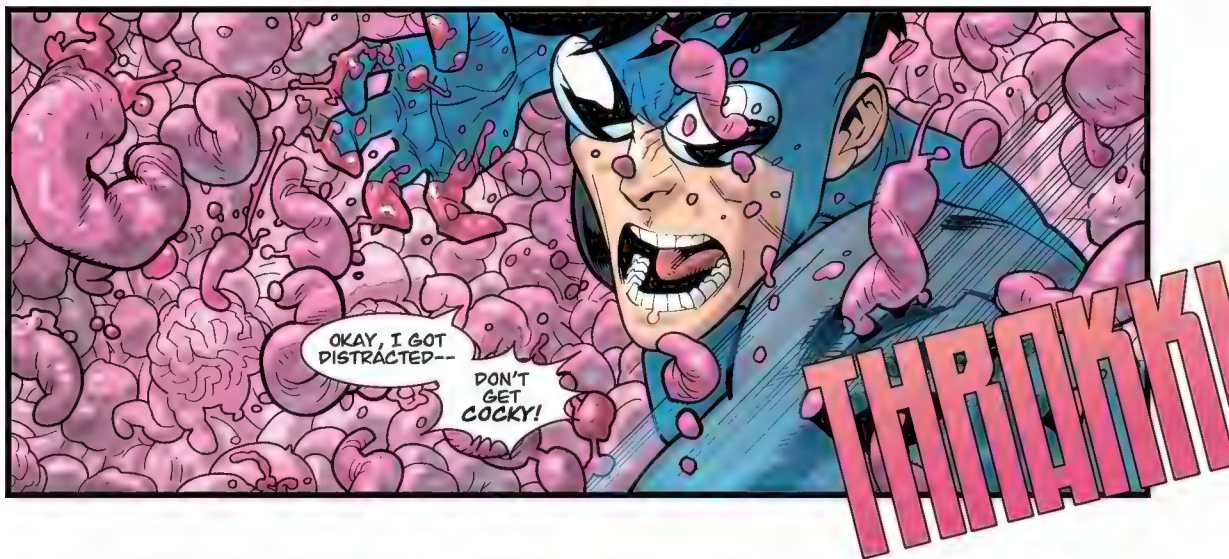
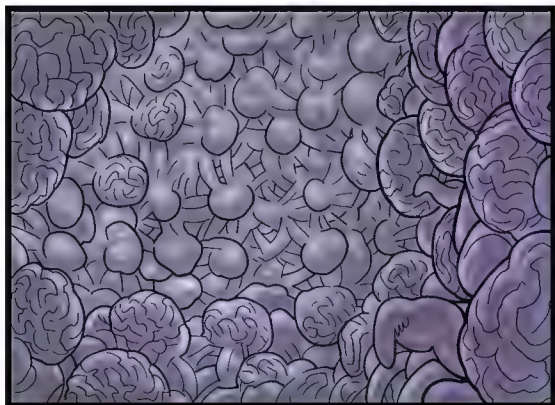


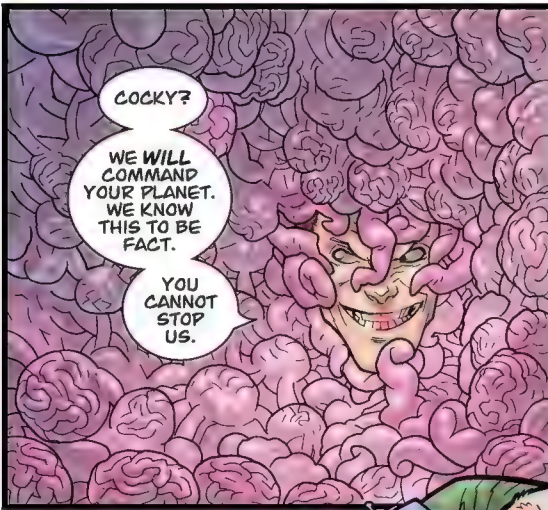
WRAMMM!!











COCKY?

WE WILL
COMMAND
YOUR PLANET.
WE KNOW
THIS TO BE
FACT.

YOU
CANNOT
STOP
US.



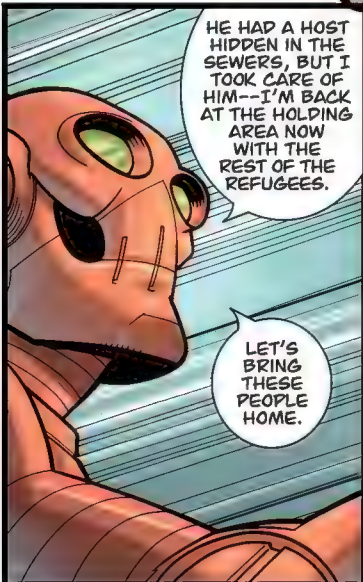
REALLY?
HAH!

I DON'T
THINK YOU'VE
BEEN PAYING
ATTENTION.

OKAY, GUARDIANS--LISTEN
UP! IT'S JUST HIM AND US
IN THE CITY--SO LET'S
FOCUS ALL ATTENTION
ON THIS GUY AND
WRAP THIS UP.

I'D LIKE TO
PUT BRIT JUNIOR
TO BED MYSELF
TONIGHT, GIVE THE
LITTLE WOMAN A
BREAK. I'VE BEEN
WORKING TOO
MANY NIGHTS
LATELY.

SO LET'S
TAKE THIS
JERK
DOWN!



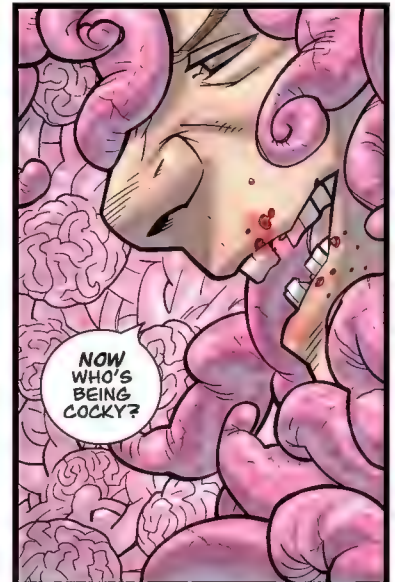
HE HAD A HOST
HIDDEN IN THE
SEWERS, BUT I
TOOK CARE OF
HIM--I'M BACK
AT THE HOLDING
AREA NOW
WITH THE
REST OF THE
REFUGEES.

LET'S
BRING
THESE
PEOPLE
HOME.

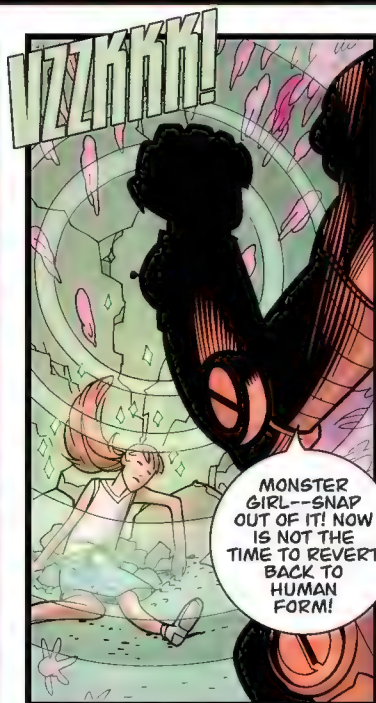
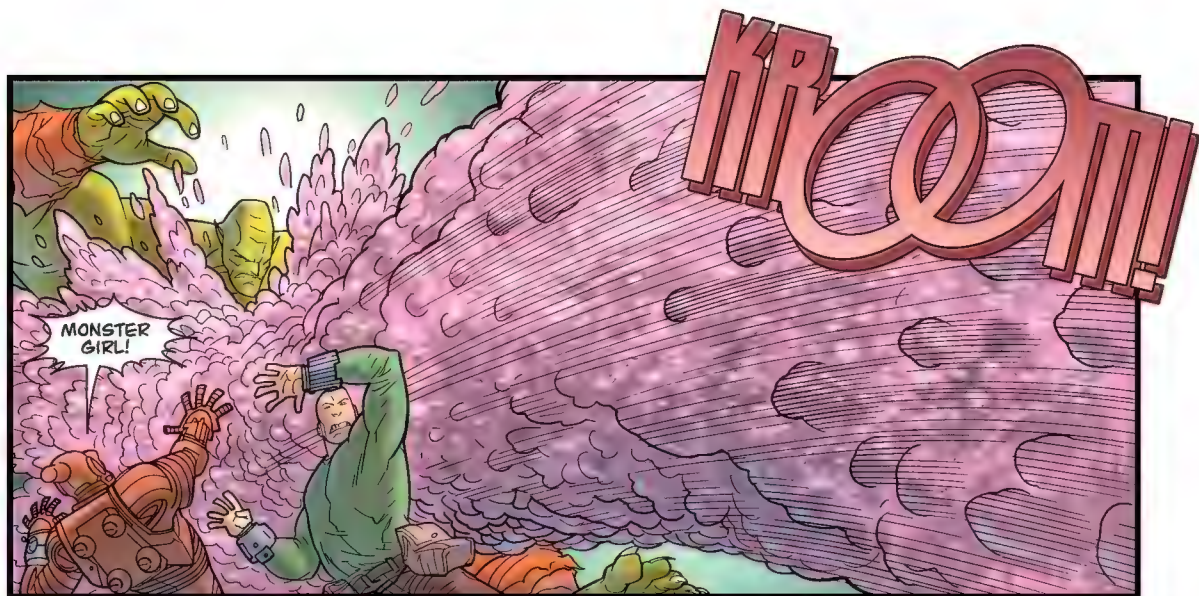
HEAR THAT,
SEQUIP MAN--
OR WHATEVER
YOU'RE
CALLING
YOURSELF...

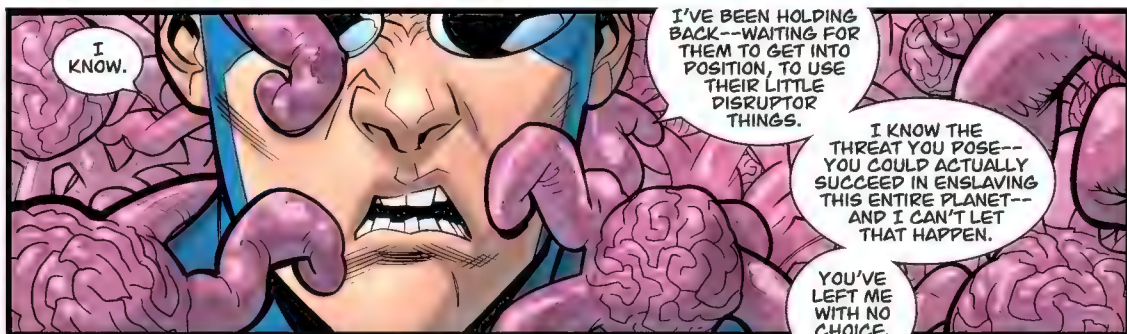
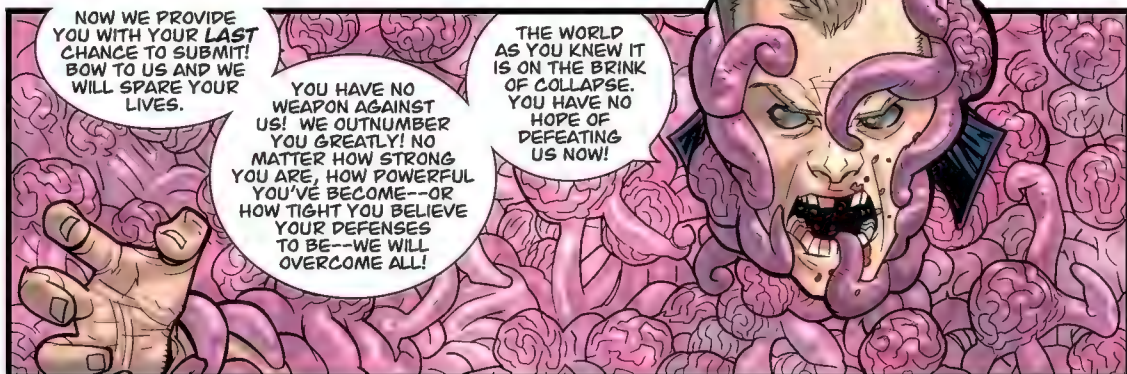
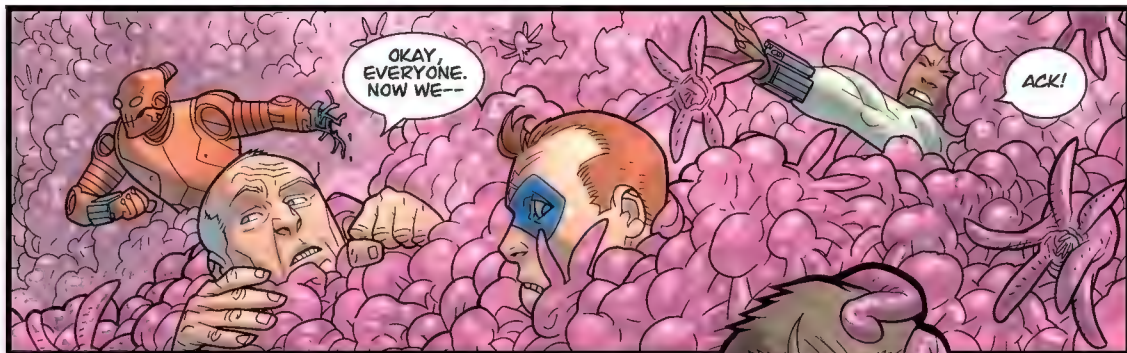
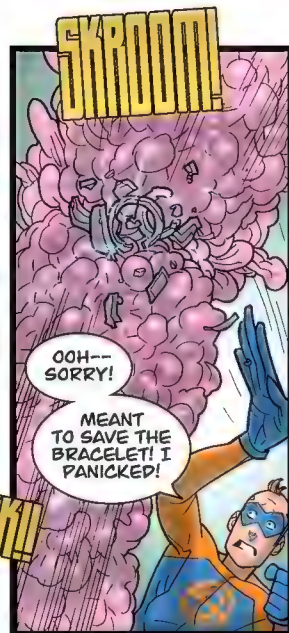
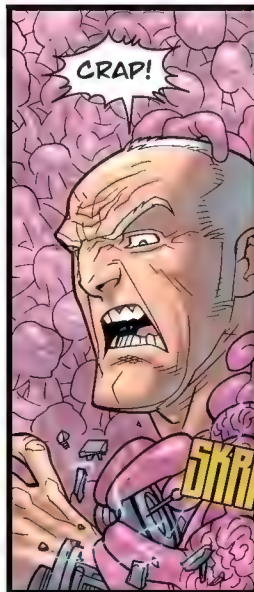
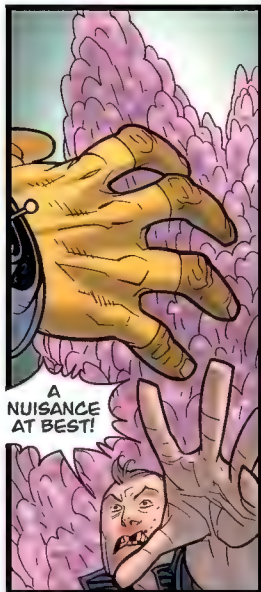
...IT'S
ONLY A
MATTER
OF TIME.

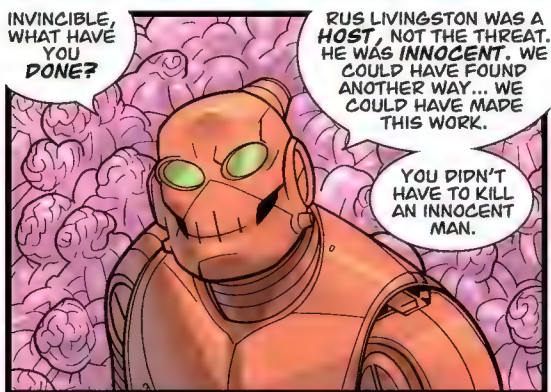
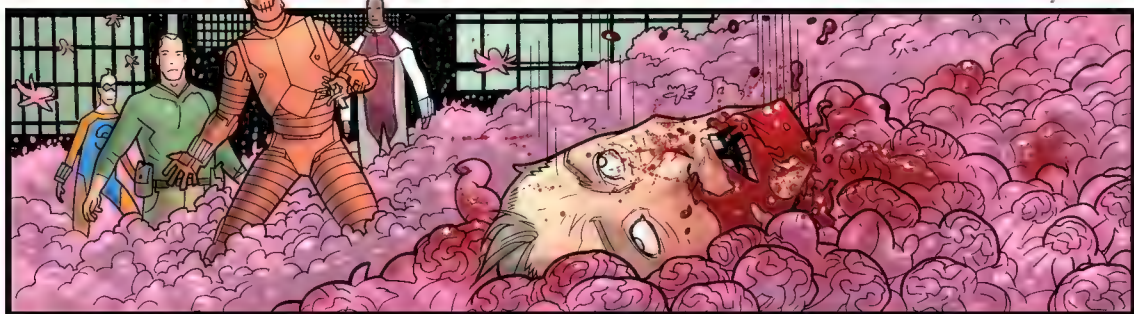
SHROOD!

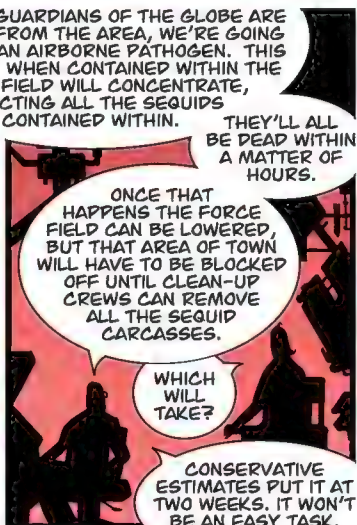
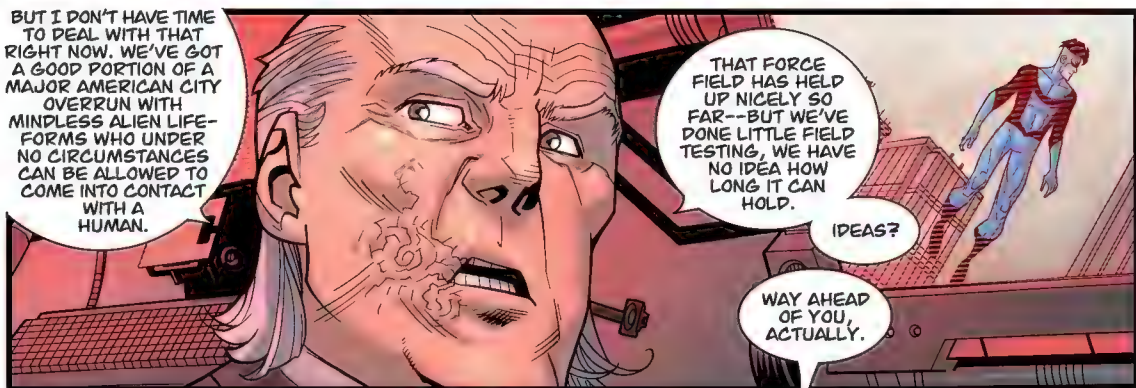
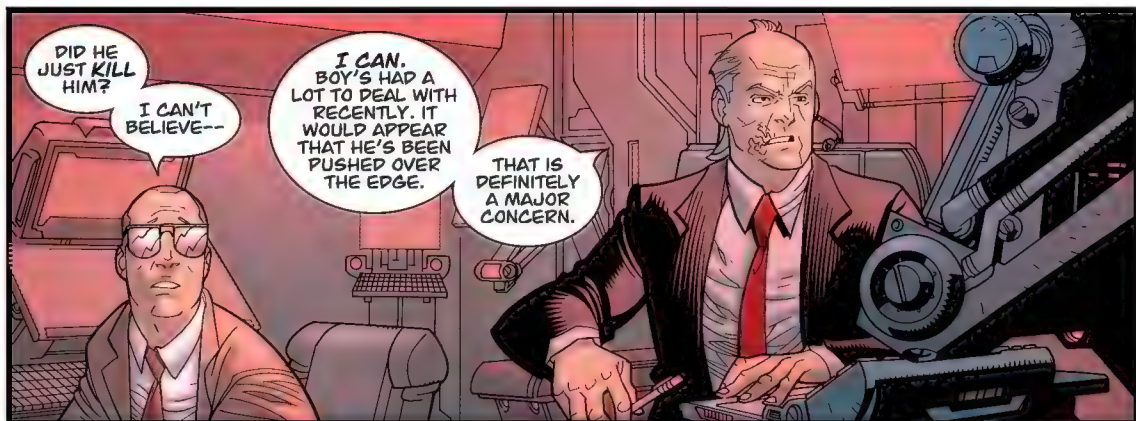
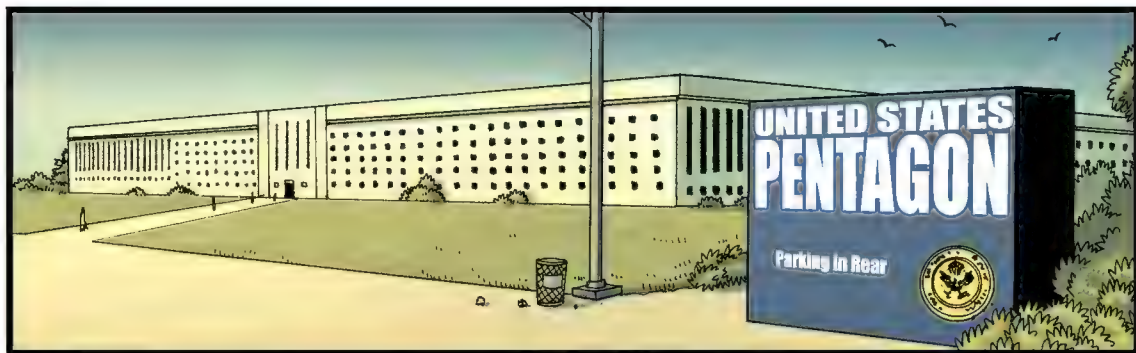


NOW
WHO'S
BEING
COCKY?









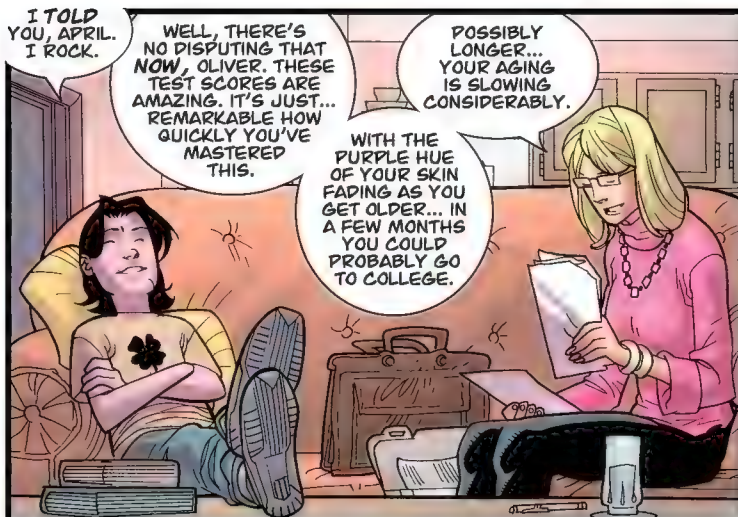


I TOLD YOU, APRIL. I ROCK.

WELL, THERE'S NO DISPUTING THAT NOW, OLIVER. THESE TEST SCORES ARE AMAZING. IT'S JUST... REMARKABLE HOW QUICKLY YOU'VE MASTERED THIS.

POSSIBLY LONGER... YOUR AGING IS SLOWING CONSIDERABLY.

WITH THE PURPLE HUE OF YOUR SKIN FADING AS YOU GET OLDER... IN A FEW MONTHS YOU COULD PROBABLY GO TO COLLEGE.



YOU THINK I'LL BE AN ADULT SOON? I'VE DONE SOME MATH, TRYING TO EXTRAPOLATE THE RATE AT WHICH I'LL HIT CERTAIN AGES, BUT WITH MY PROGRESSION SLOWING AT SUCH AN ABRUPT RATE...

MY DATA IS KIND OF USELESS.



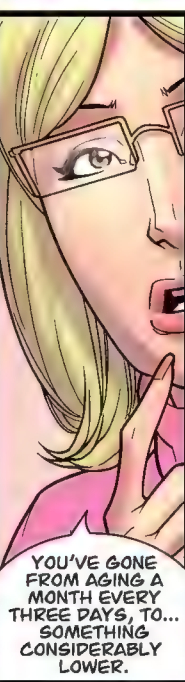
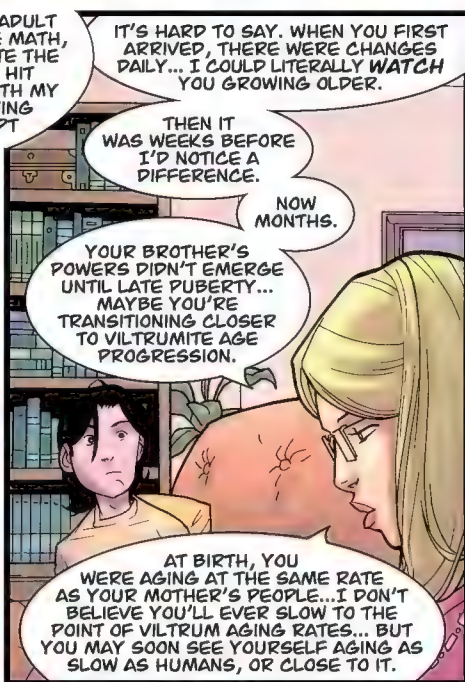
IT'S HARD TO SAY. WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVED, THERE WERE CHANGES DAILY... I COULD LITERALLY WATCH YOU GROWING OLDER.

THEN IT WAS WEEKS BEFORE I'D NOTICE A DIFFERENCE.

NOW MONTHS.

YOUR BROTHER'S POWERS DIDN'T EMERGE UNTIL LATE PUBERTY... MAYBE YOU'RE TRANSITIONING CLOSER TO VILTRUMITE AGE PROGRESSION.

AT BIRTH, YOU WERE AGING AT THE SAME RATE AS YOUR MOTHER'S PEOPLE... I DON'T BELIEVE YOU'LL EVER SLOW TO THE POINT OF VILTRUMITE AGING RATES... BUT YOU MAY SOON SEE YOURSELF AGING AS SLOW AS HUMANS, OR CLOSE TO IT.



YOU'VE GONE FROM AGING A MONTH EVERY THREE DAYS, TO... SOMETHING CONSIDERABLY LOWER.

YOU APPEAR TO BE FOURTEEN, MAYBE FIFTEEN NOW. IT COULD BE A YEAR OR EVEN TWO BEFORE YOU REACH ADULTHOOD.

CRUD.



WELL, I GUESS YOU ACTUALLY DIDN'T NEED MY HELP, THEN?

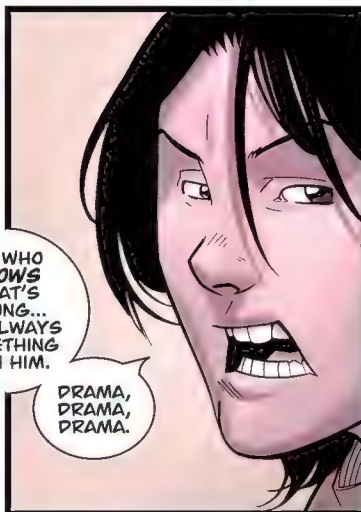
I'LL BE IN MY ROOM.

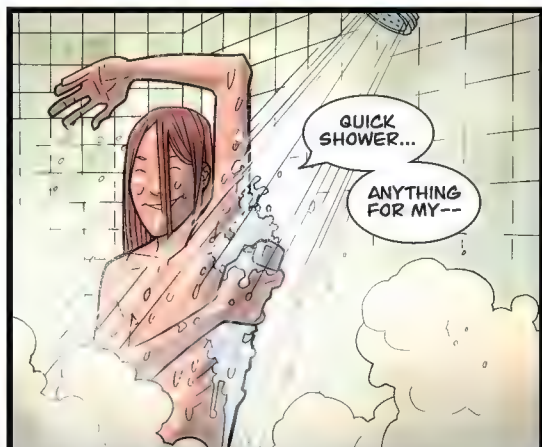
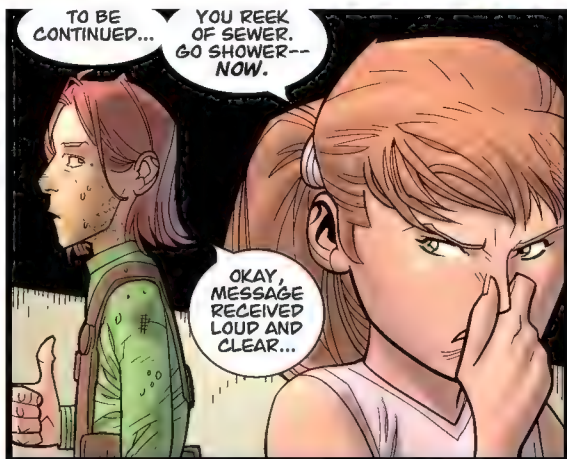
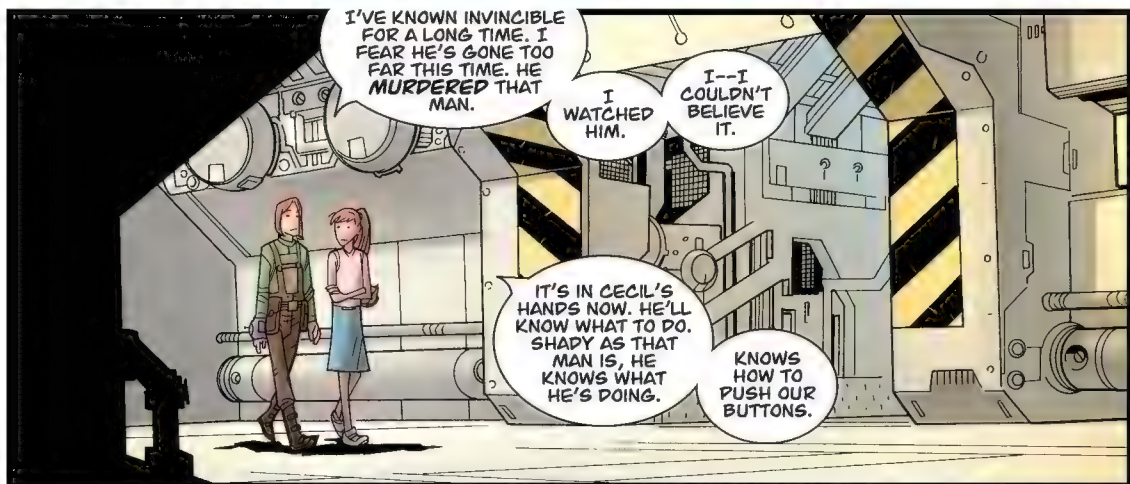
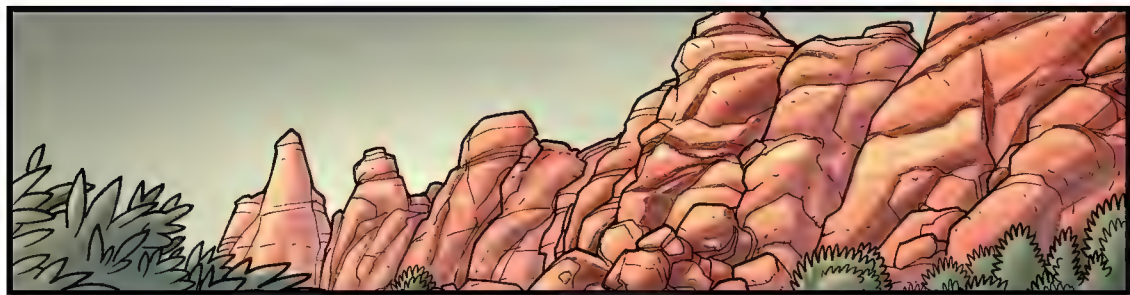


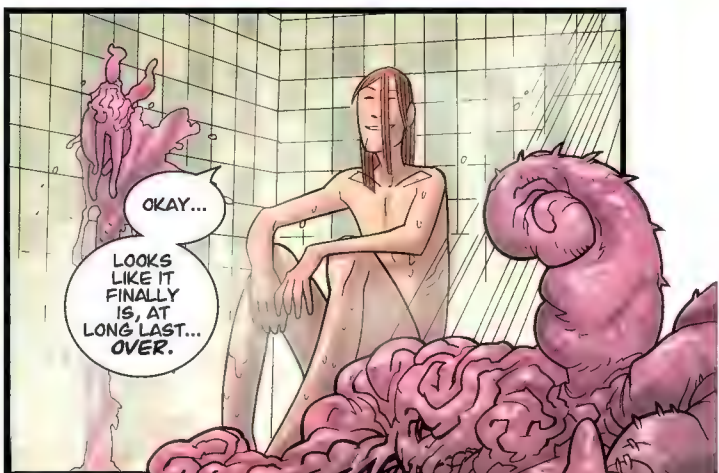
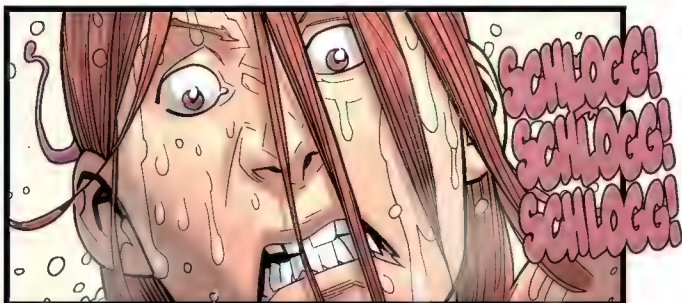
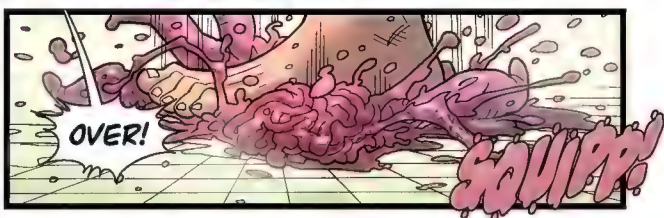
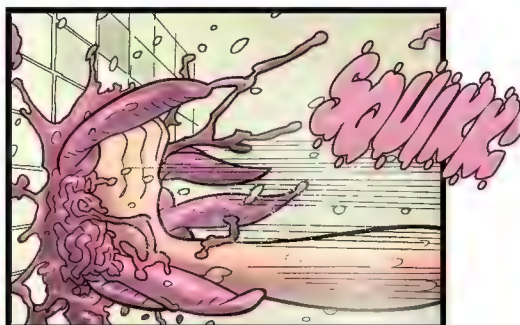
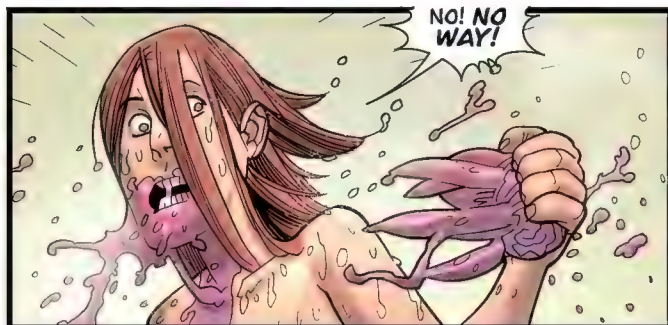
WHAT WAS THAT? YOU GUYS AREN'T FIGHTING AGAIN, ARE YOU?

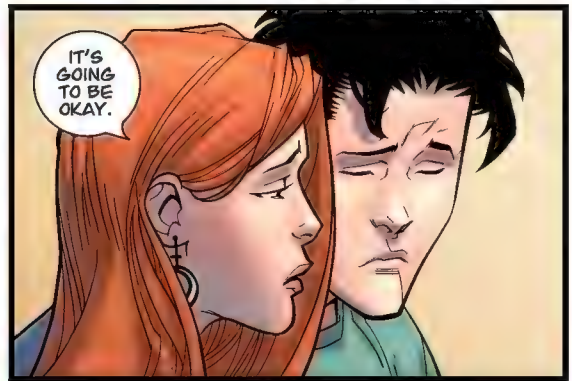
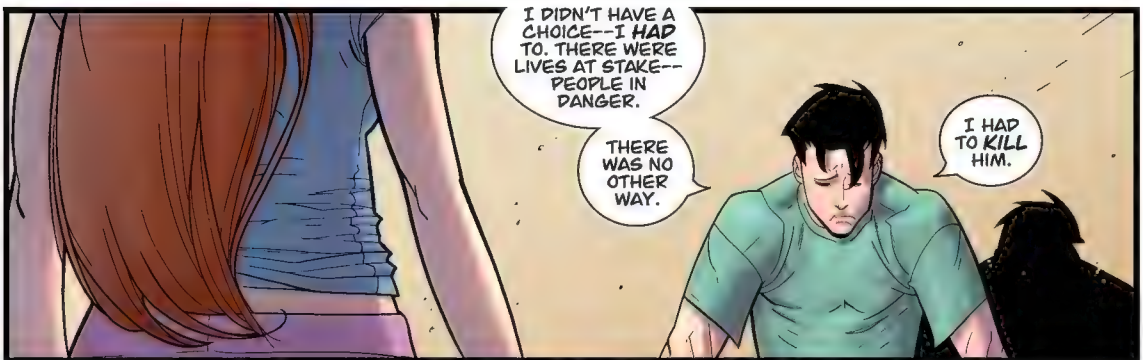
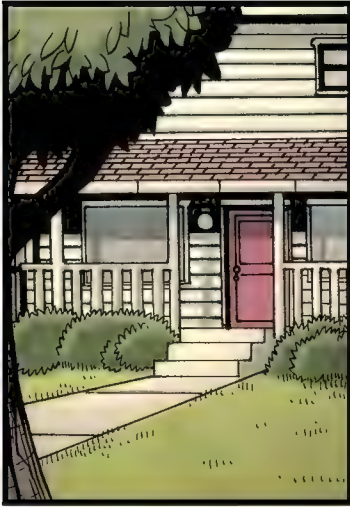
NO. WHO KNOWS WHAT'S WRONG... IT'S ALWAYS SOMETHING WITH HIM.

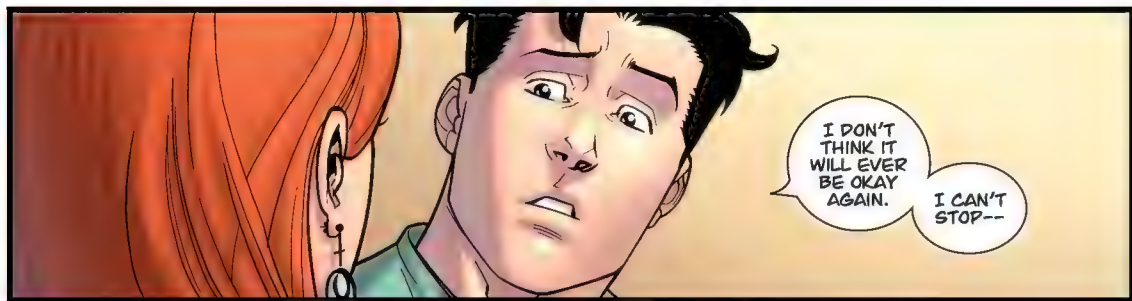
DRAMA, DRAMA, DRAMA.









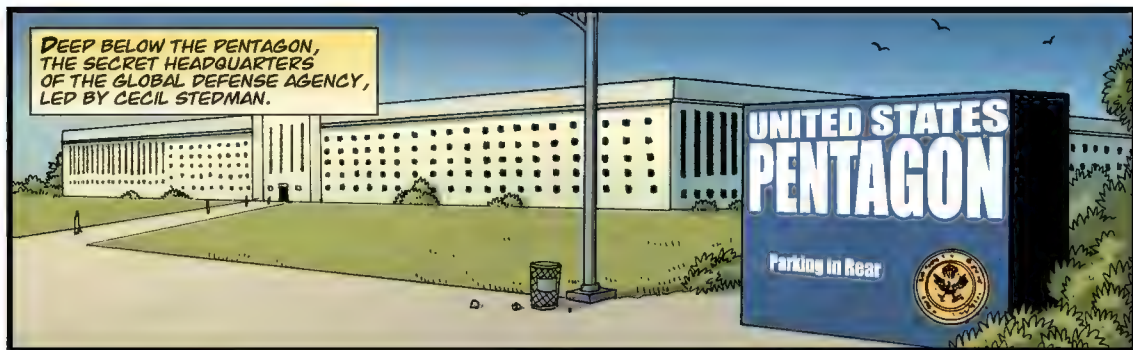




INVINCIBLE RETURNS I



FINCH 2009



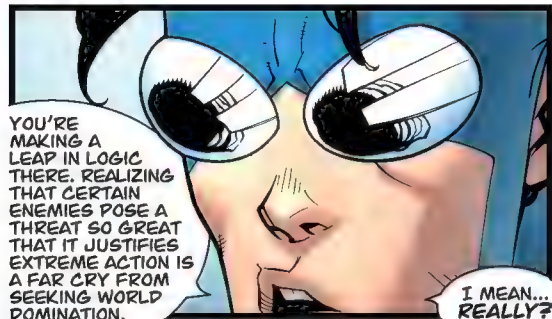


THE DISAGREEMENT THAT ENDED OUR RELATIONSHIP STEMMED FROM YOUR UNYIELDING SENSE OF RIGHT AND WRONG. ONCE YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND, THAT'S IT--YOU'LL FIGHT YOUR OWN BEST FRIEND IF YOU THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

YOU DISAGREED WITH YOUR OWN FATHER WHEN HE REVEALED HIS PLANS TO CONQUER THIS PLANET. YOU IMMEDIATELY CHOSE TO FIGHT HIM--PUTTING AT RISK A LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP.

I ADMIRE YOUR ABILITY TO STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN--NO MATTER THE COST. BUT NOW YOU'RE DISPLAYING AN ABILITY TO **CHANGE** WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN, TO ADJUST YOUR STANCE AT WILL.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DECIDE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE FIT TO RULE THIS PLANET?



YOU'RE MAKING A LEAP IN LOGIC THERE, REALIZING THAT CERTAIN ENEMIES POSE A THREAT SO GREAT THAT IT JUSTIFIES EXTREME ACTION IS A FAR CRY FROM SEEKING WORLD DOMINATION.

I MEAN... REALLY?



HOLD THAT THOUGHT. SINCLAIR, ARE YOU READY TO RECEIVE US?



GIVE ME ANOTHER THIRTY SECONDS AND WE'LL BE CLEAR.

WHY DOES HE WANT ME HERE FOR THIS?

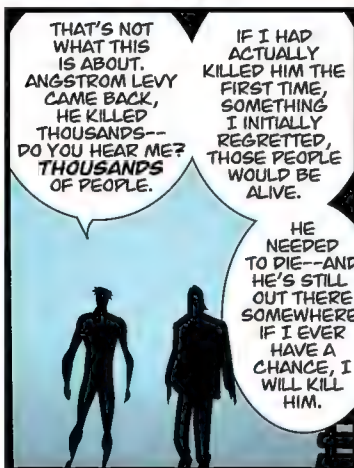
I HAVE NO IDEA. HELP ME GET THESE CANISTERS CLOSED. HE WANTS THEM HIDDEN FOR SOME REASON.



YOUR TEMPER GETS THE BETTER OF YOU MORE TIMES THAN I WOULD LIKE. IT'S BRED INTO YOU--IN YOUR BLOOD.

YOU ARE A **VILTRUMITE**, THAT APPEARS TO COME WITH A GOOD DEAL OF BUILT-IN AGGRESSION.

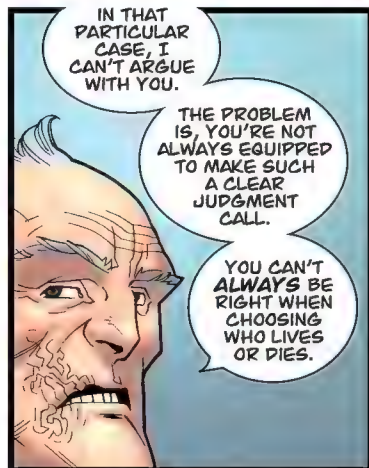
WE'VE DISCUSSED THIS, I KNOW THIS IS A CONCERN YOU SHARE.



THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT. **ANGSTROM LEVY** CAME BACK, HE KILLED THOUSANDS--DO YOU HEAR ME? **THOUSANDS** OF PEOPLE.

IF I HAD ACTUALLY KILLED HIM THE FIRST TIME, SOMETHING I INITIALLY REGRETTED, THOSE PEOPLE WOULD BE ALIVE.

HE NEEDED TO DIE--AND HE'S STILL OUT THERE SOMEWHERE. IF I EVER HAVE A CHANCE, I WILL KILL HIM.



IN THAT PARTICULAR CASE, I CAN'T ARGUE WITH YOU.

THE PROBLEM IS, YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS EQUIPPED TO MAKE SUCH A CLEAR JUDGMENT CALL.

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS BE RIGHT WHEN CHOOSING WHO LIVES OR DIES.

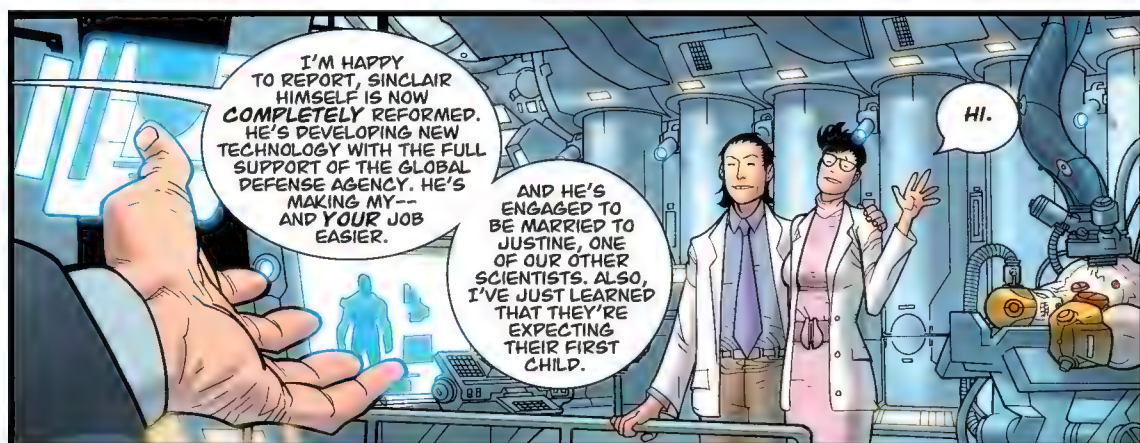


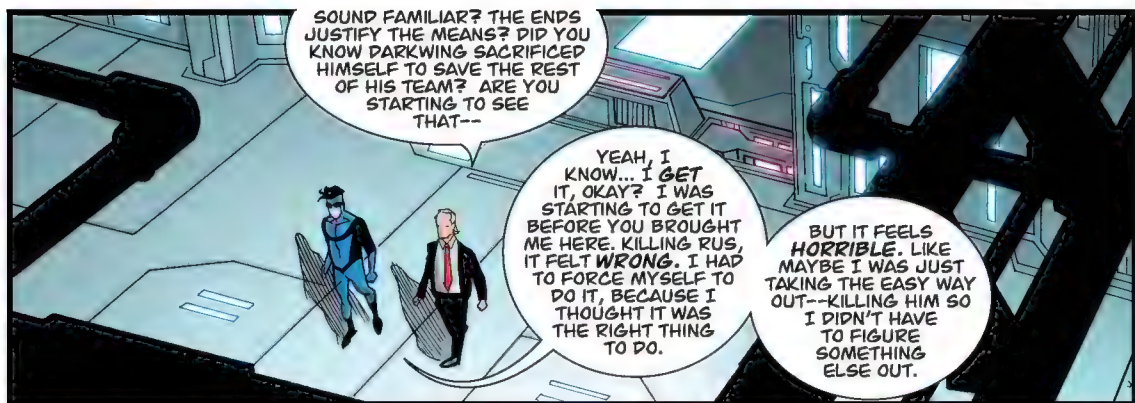
THIS IS A **LEARNING** EXPERIENCE. D.A. SINCLAIR, HE WAS DEVELOPING HIS REANIMEN TECHNOLOGY WHILE ATTENDING UPSTATE UNIVERSITY. HE EXPERIMENTED ON THE HOMELESS PEOPLE IN THE AREA--EVEN A FEW STUDENTS.

NOW THAT THE TECHNOLOGY IS IN USE, THE REANIMEN TROOPS ARE SAVING **COUNTLESS** LIVES. BUILT ON CAPAVERS NOW, THEY EACH TAKE THE PLACE OF **TWENTY** FOOT SOLDIERS.

HORRIFIC THINGS WERE DONE TO THOSE MEN, WE ALL AGREE ON THAT, BUT NO ONE LISTENED TO SINCLAIR, NO ONE BELIEVED HIS THEORIES AT FIRST. HE HAD TO PUT THEM INTO PRACTICE TO PROVE HIMSELF.

THEY'RE MAKING THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE.





SOUND FAMILIAR? THE ENDS JUSTIFY THE MEANS? DID YOU KNOW PARKWING SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE THE REST OF HIS TEAM? ARE YOU STARTING TO SEE THAT--

YEAH, I KNOW... I GET IT, OKAY? I WAS STARTING TO GET IT BEFORE YOU BROUGHT ME HERE, KILLING RUS, IT FELT **WRONG**. I HAD TO FORCE MYSELF TO DO IT, BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

BUT IT FEELS **HORRIBLE**. LIKE MAYBE I WAS JUST TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT--KILLING HIM SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO FIGURE SOMETHING ELSE OUT.



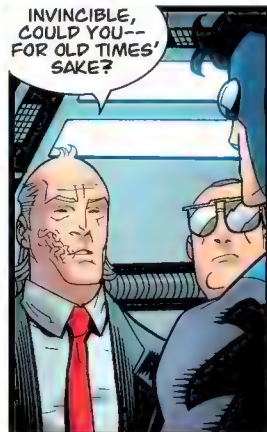
I GET WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, KILLING IS **ALMOST NEVER** JUSTIFIED. OTHERWISE, I'M JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHER VILTRUMITES. YOU KNOW I DON'T WANT THAT.

THESE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN HARD ON ME-- IT'S GOT ME ALL TURNED AROUND. I'LL BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT I LOST MY WAY.

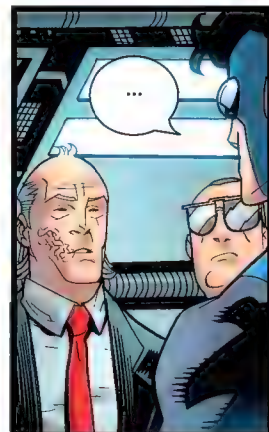
THANK YOU FOR ADMITTING THAT. LOOK, I KNOW THIS ISN'T GOING TO REPAIR OUR RELATIONSHIP OVERNIGHT, BUT IF--



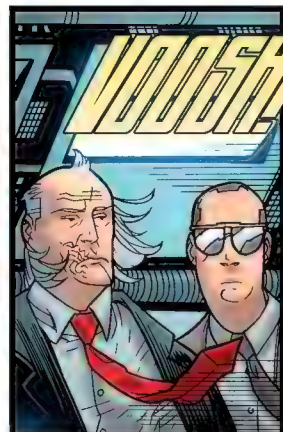
WE'VE GOT A SITUATION IN NEW YORK. LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO SEND SOMEONE IN.



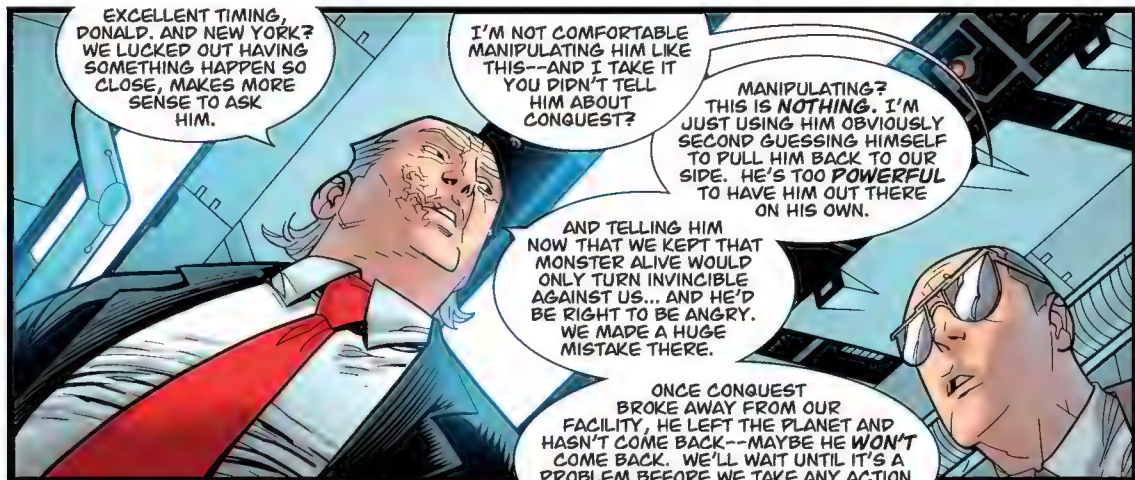
INVINCIBLE, COULD YOU-- FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE?



...



WOOSH!



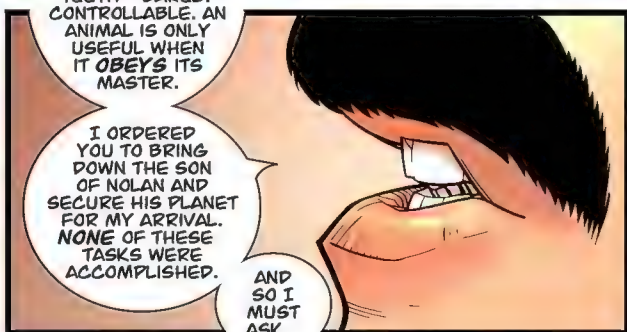
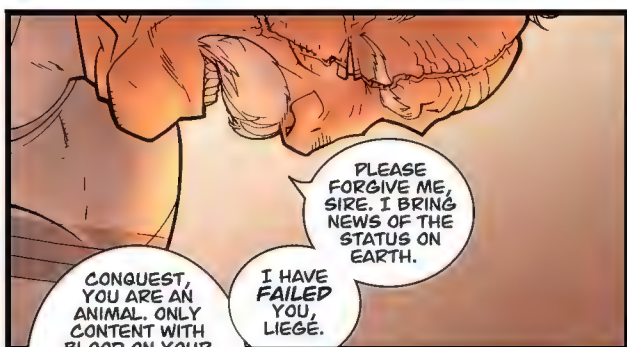
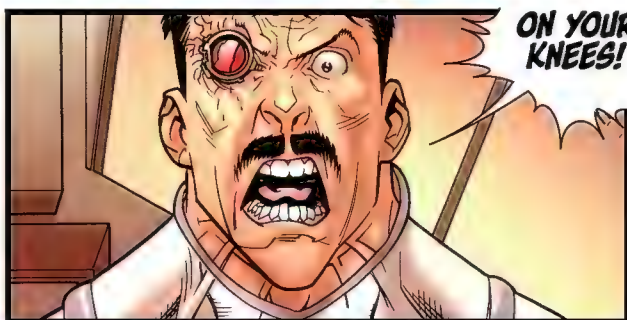
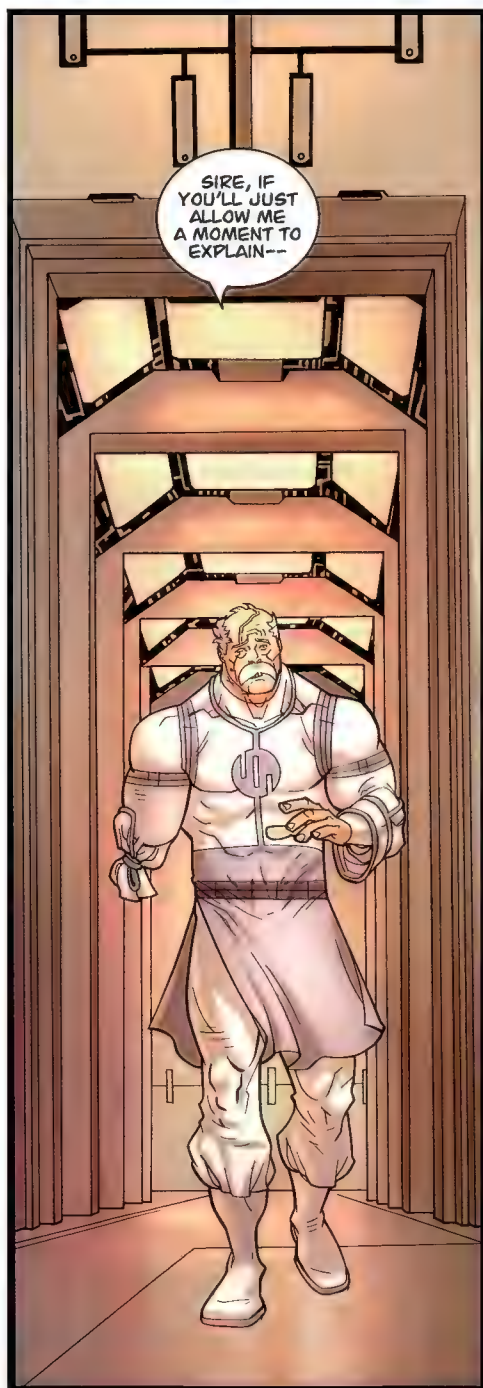
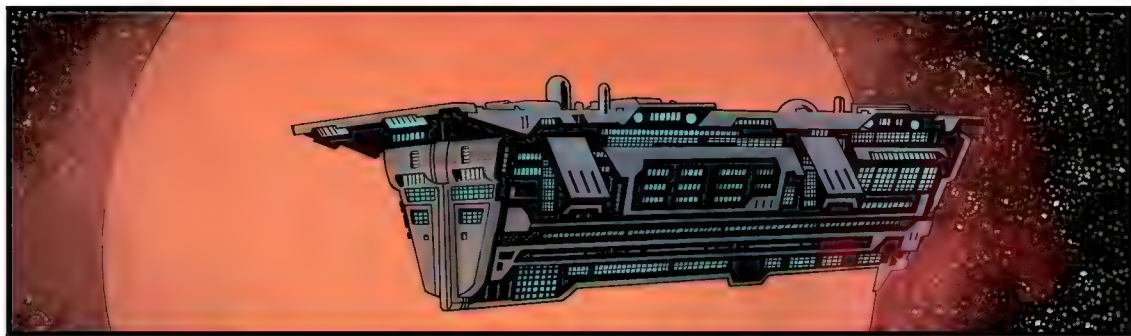
EXCELLENT TIMING, DONALD. AND NEW YORK? WE LUCKED OUT HAVING SOMETHING HAPPEN SO CLOSE, MAKES MORE SENSE TO ASK HIM.

I'M NOT COMFORTABLE MANIPULATING HIM LIKE THIS--AND I TAKE IT YOU DIDN'T TELL HIM ABOUT CONQUEST?

MANIPULATING? THIS IS **NOTHING**. I'M JUST USING HIM OBVIOUSLY SECOND GUESSING HIMSELF TO PULL HIM BACK TO OUR SIDE. HE'S TOO **POWERFUL** TO HAVE HIM OUT THERE ON HIS OWN.

AND TELLING HIM NOW THAT WE KEPT THAT MONSTER ALIVE WOULD ONLY TURN INVINCIBLE AGAINST US... AND HE'D BE RIGHT TO BE ANGRY. WE MADE A HUGE MISTAKE THERE.

ONCE CONQUEST BROKE AWAY FROM OUR FACILITY, HE LEFT THE PLANET AND HASN'T COME BACK--MAYBE HE **WON'T** COME BACK. WE'LL WAIT UNTIL IT'S A PROBLEM BEFORE WE TAKE ANY ACTION.

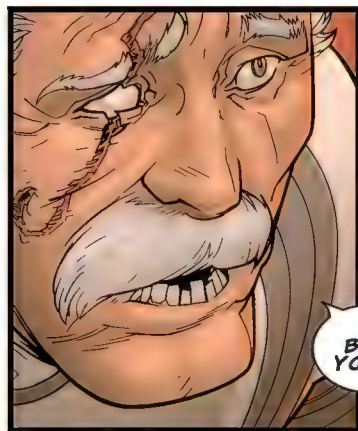




...OF WHAT
FURTHER
USE COULD
YOU BE TO
ME?

I UNDERESTIMATED
THE BOY. I TOYED WITH
HIM FAR TOO LONG, I
GAVE HIM TIME TO GAIN
AN ADVANTAGE.

I HAVE
SERVED YOU
WELL FOR MANY
YEARS. PLEASE
FORGIVE MY
CARELESSNESS
AND SPARE
ME.



I
BEG
YOU...



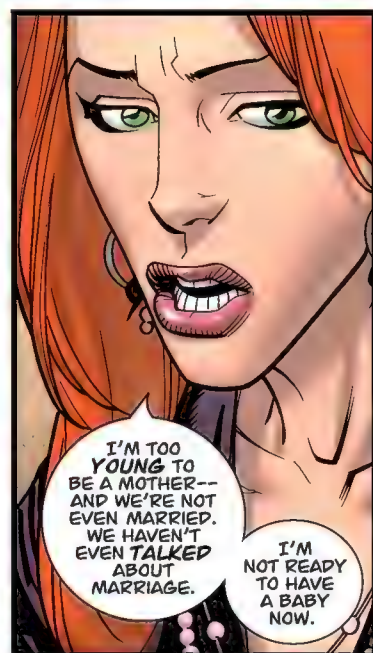
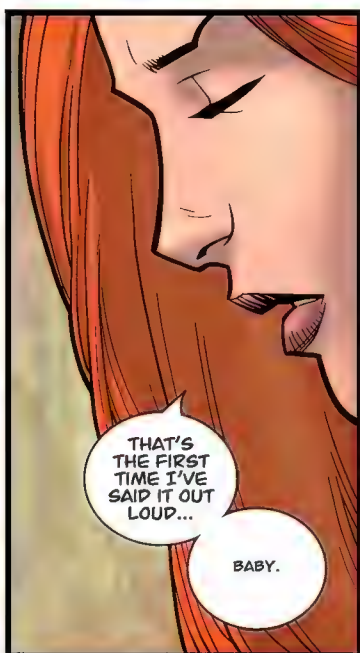
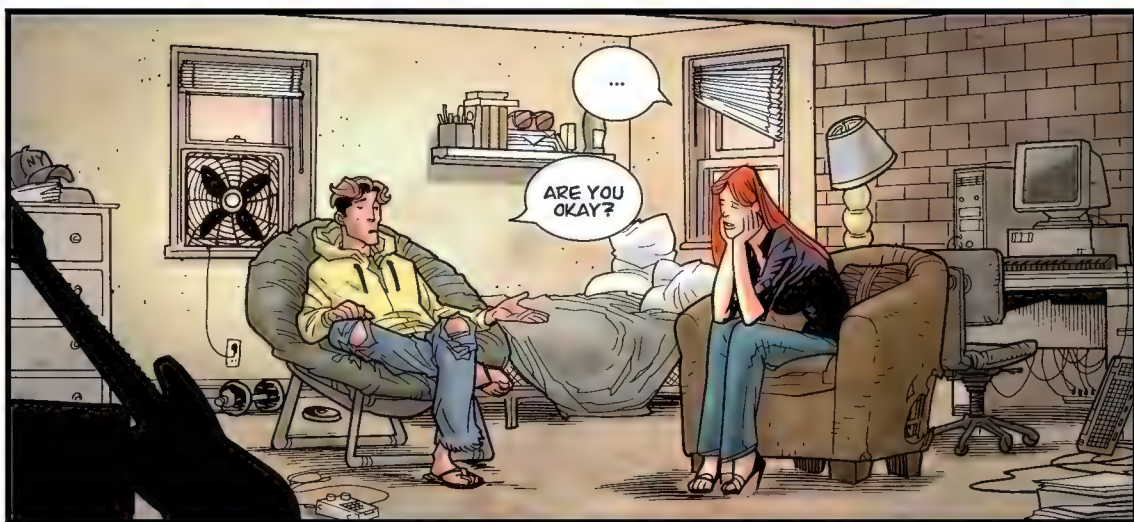
WE HAVE LEARNED OF
A TEAM SENT TO EARTH
TO RETRIEVE NOLAN'S
SON AND BRING HIM
INTO DIRECT CONFLICT
WITH US.

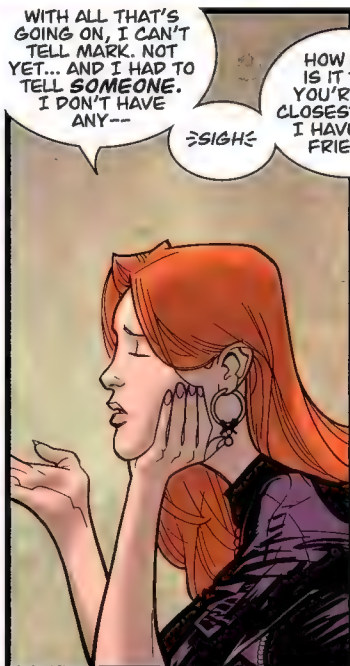
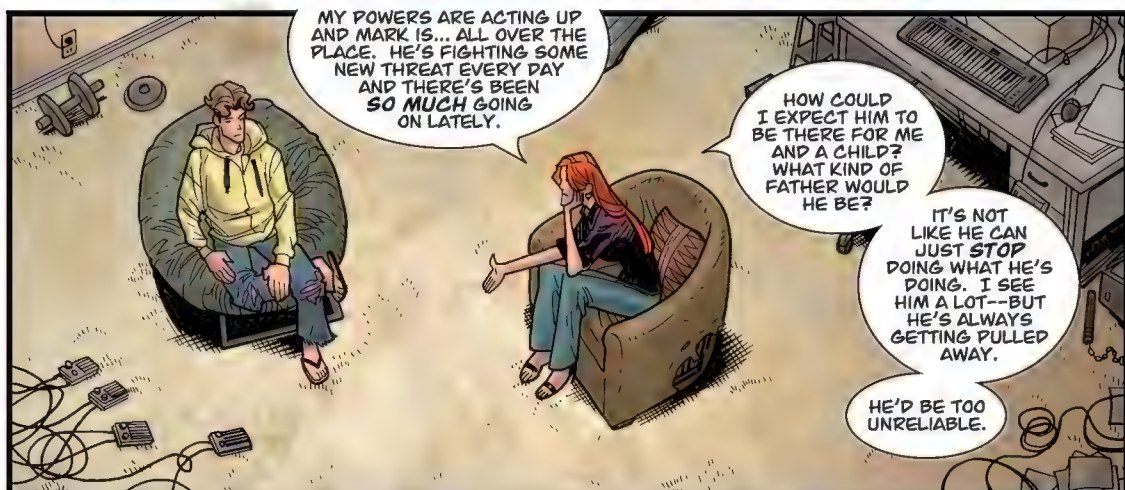
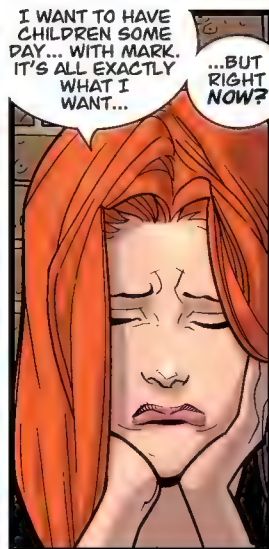
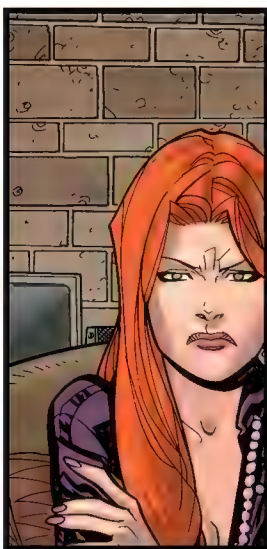
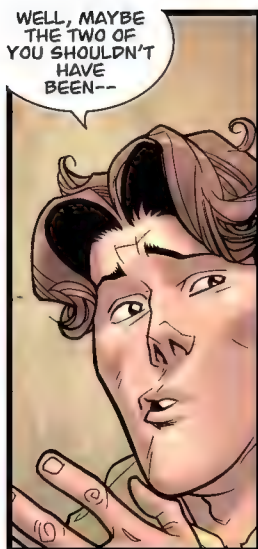


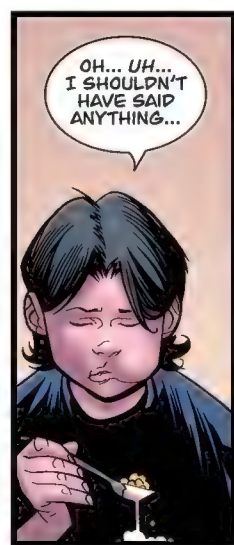
I DOUBT YOU HAVE TIME
TO PREVENT THIS, BUT GO,
CATCH THEM ON THEIR
RETURN AND ENSURE NONE
OF THEM ARE ABLE TO
JOIN THE FIGHT.

LEAVE
NONE
ALIVE.

DO NOT
FAIL ME
AGAIN.









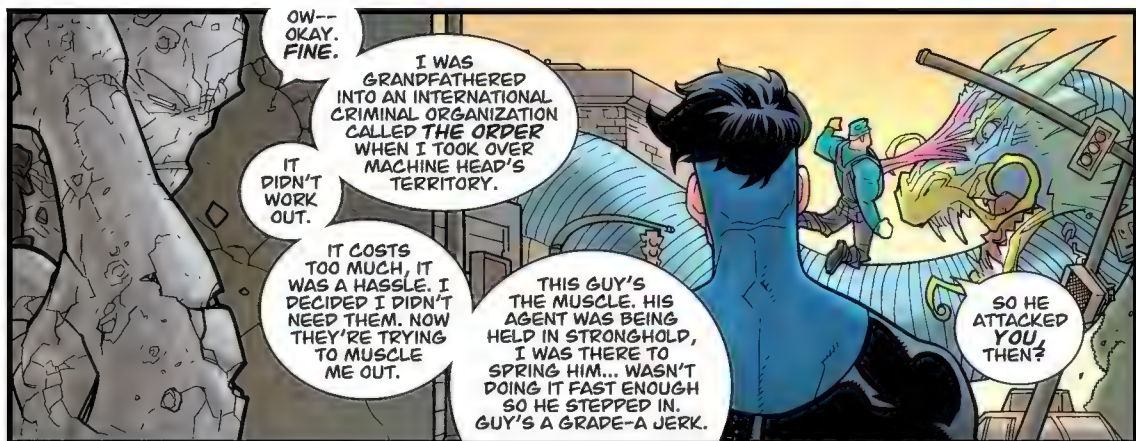
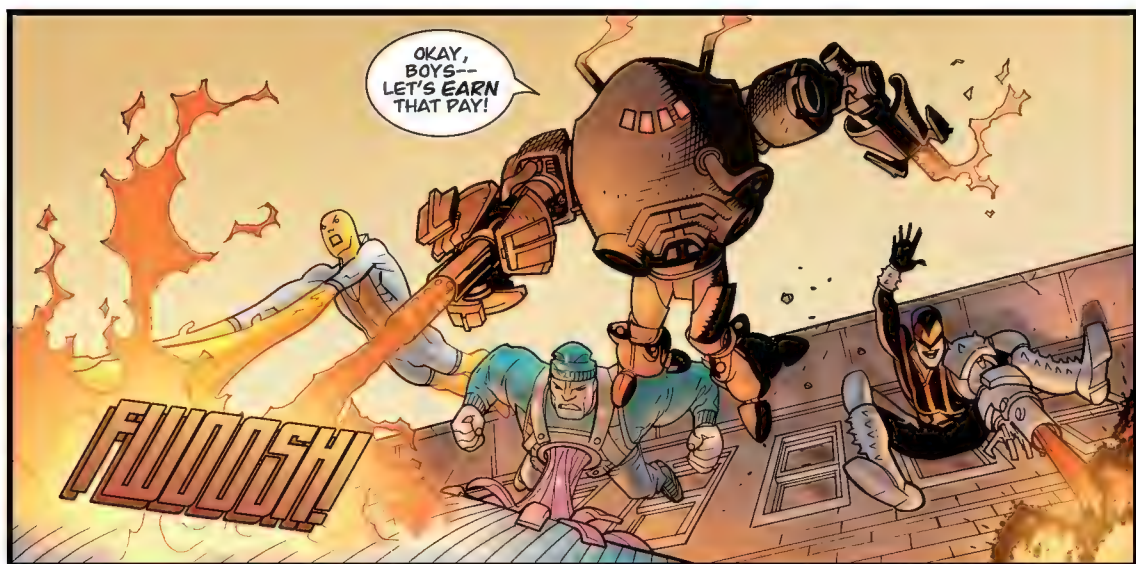
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING AGAIN!

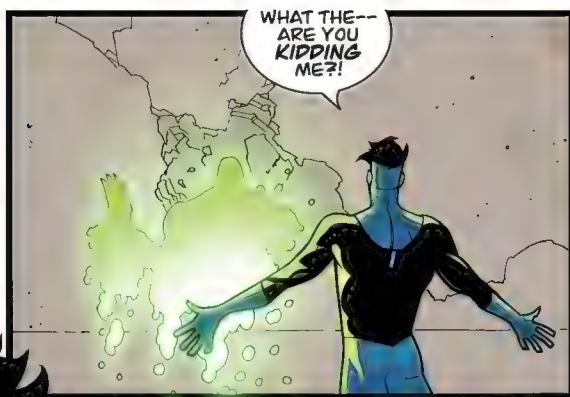
RELAX!

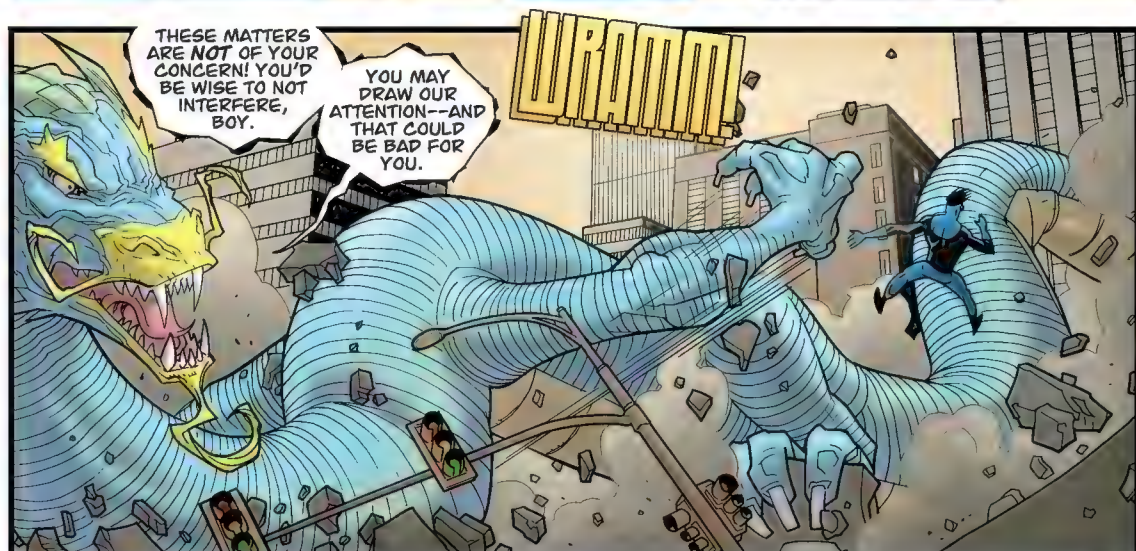
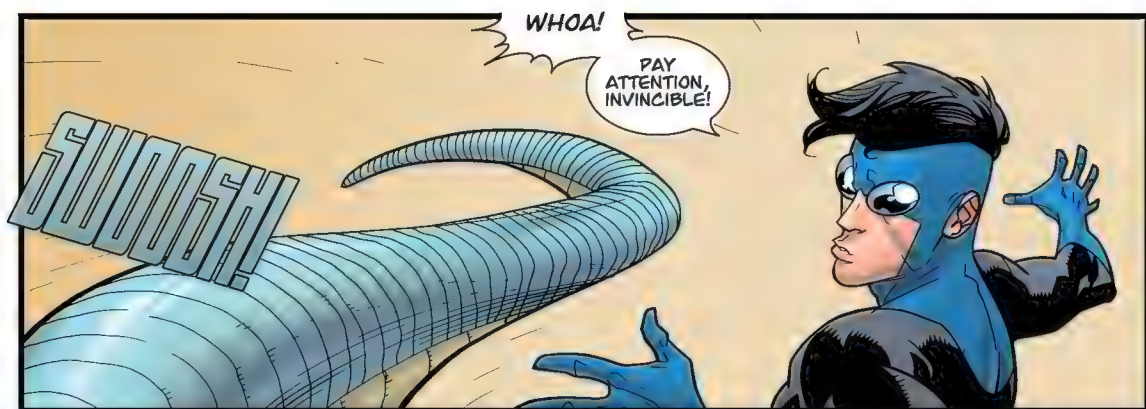
NOBODY ASKED YOU TO GET INVOLVED!

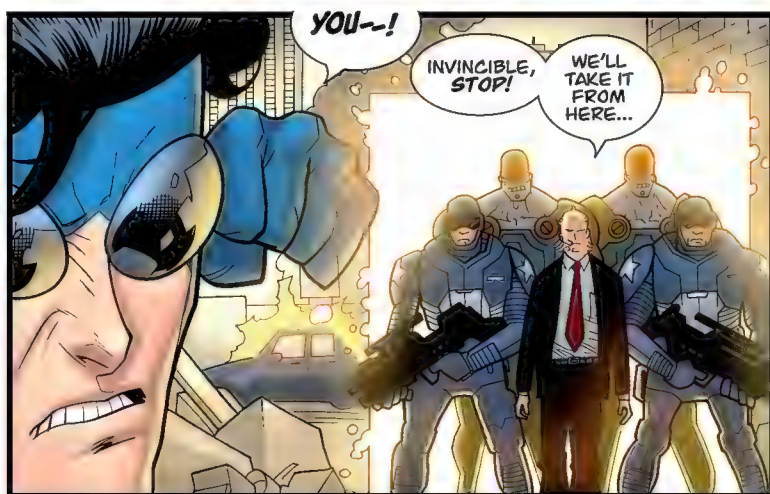
KROOOM!

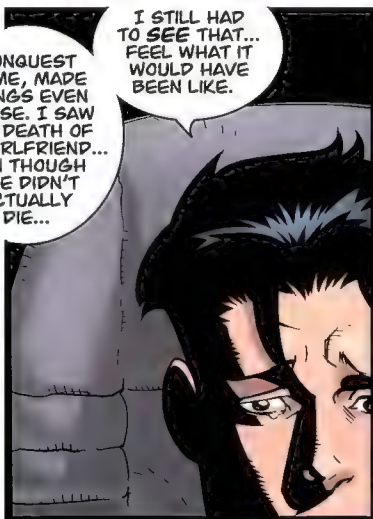












IT'S LIKE--NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT'S REALLY AT STAKE, I'M WILLING TO GO TO EXTREMES.



I KILLED A MAN.



...



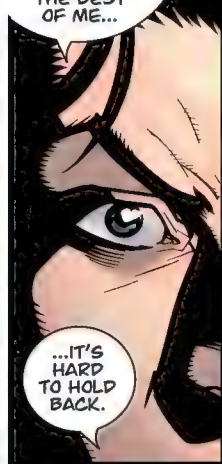
I DID IT TO PREVENT MORE DEATHS... BUT IT STILL FELT SO WRONG.

AND I...



I ALMOST DID IT AGAIN, TODAY.

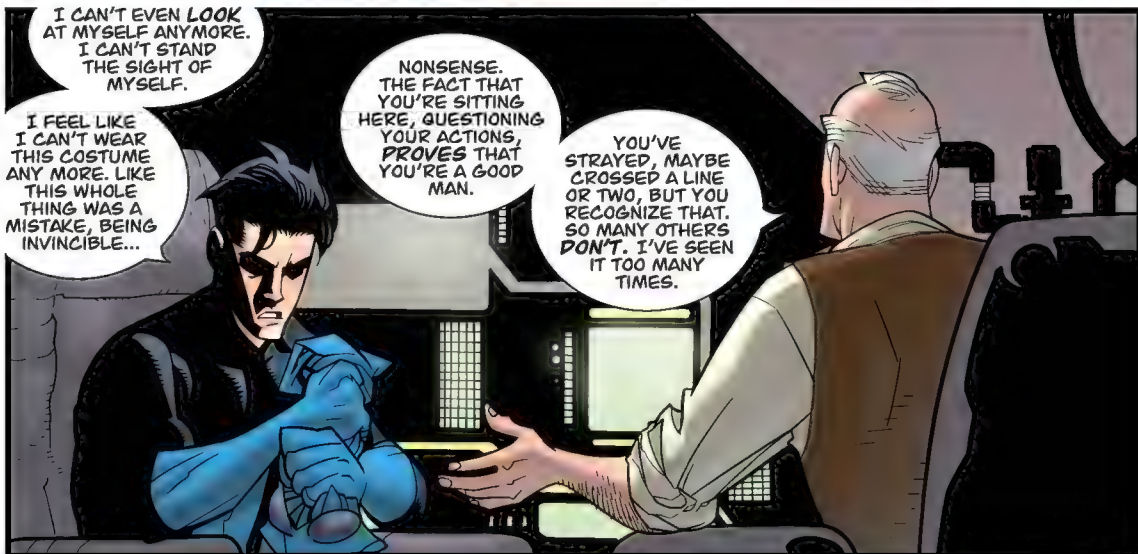
NOW THAT I'VE OPENED THAT DOOR, I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN CLOSE IT. MY TEMPER GETS THE BEST OF ME...



...IT'S HARD TO HOLD BACK.

I CAN'T EVEN LOOK AT MYSELF ANYMORE. I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF MYSELF.

I FEEL LIKE I CAN'T WEAR THIS COSTUME ANY MORE. LIKE THIS WHOLE THING WAS A MISTAKE, BEING INVINCIBLE...



NONSENSE. THE FACT THAT YOU'RE SITTING HERE, QUESTIONING YOUR ACTIONS, PROVES THAT YOU'RE A GOOD MAN.

YOU'VE STRAYED, MAYBE CROSSED A LINE OR TWO, BUT YOU RECOGNIZE THAT. SO MANY OTHERS DON'T. I'VE SEEN IT TOO MANY TIMES.

WHAT YOU DO COMES WITH AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF PRESSURE. IT WEARS ON YOU.

YOU'RE HANDLING IT BETTER THAN MOST--AND YOU'VE SEEN THE WORST THIS JOB HAS TO OFFER.



IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU CAN'T WEAR THAT COSTUME ANYMORE... THEN DON'T WEAR THAT COSTUME ANYMORE.

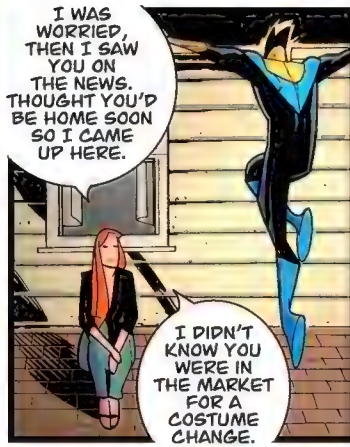
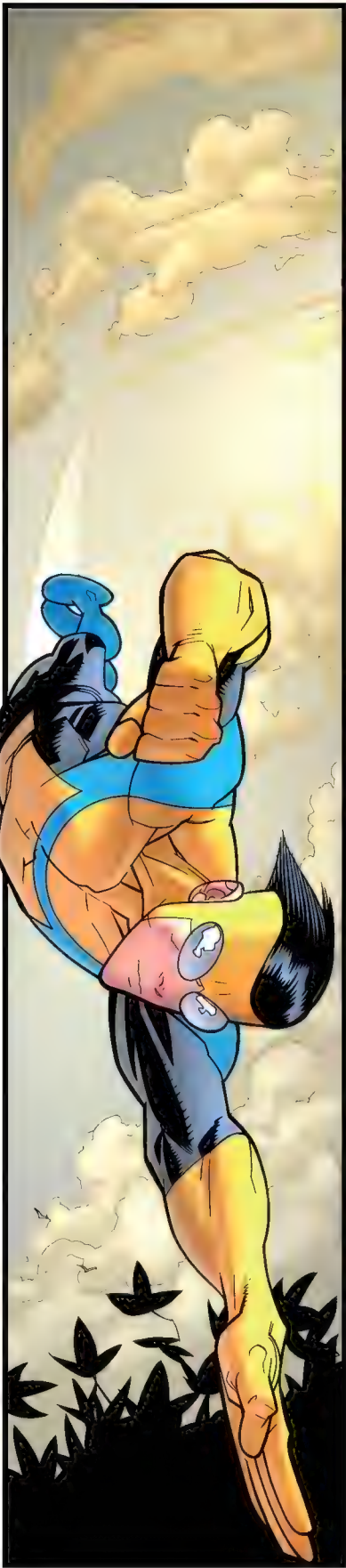


I CAN'T GO BACK IN TIME, I CAN'T UNDO WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

BUT IF YOU'RE READY TO GO BACK TO THE MAN YOU WERE, IF THAT'S REALLY WHO YOU WANT TO BE... I CAN MAKE SURE YOU LOOK THE PART.







I WAS WORRIED, THEN I SAW YOU ON THE NEWS. THOUGHT YOU'D BE HOME SOON SO I CAME UP HERE.

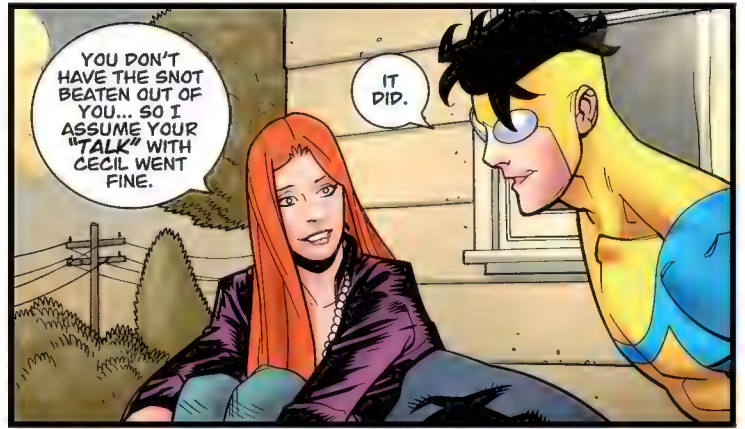
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE IN THE MARKET FOR A COSTUME CHANGE.



YEAH. I WENT TO SEE ART.

WE TALKED ABOUT MY RECENT MISSTEPS, HOW MUCH I'D LIKE TO GO BACK A FEW STEPS. FOR ART THAT MEANT A COSTUME CHANGE.

YOU KNOW HOW HE IS.

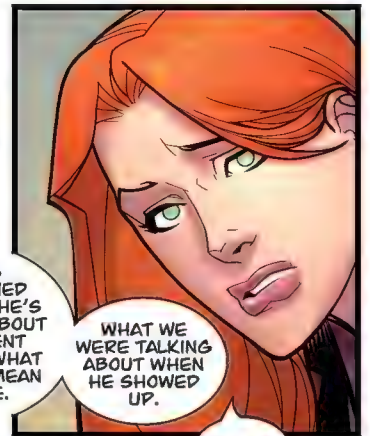


YOU DON'T HAVE THE SNOT BEATEN OUT OF YOU... SO I ASSUME YOUR "TALK" WITH CECIL WENT FINE.

IT DID.

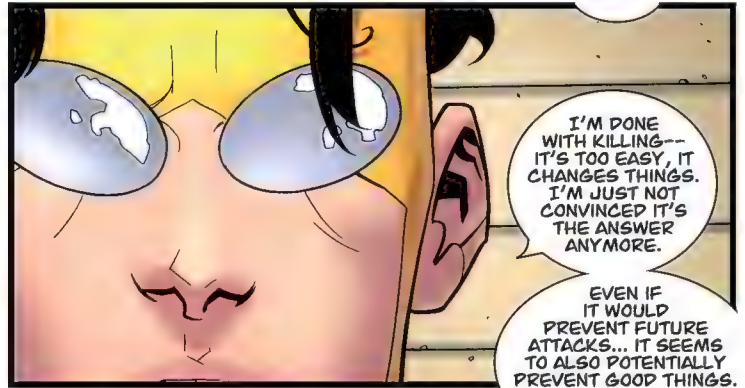


IT WAS A JUSTIFIED LECTURE. HE'S WORRIED ABOUT MY RECENT ACTIONS, WHAT IT COULD MEAN FOR ME.



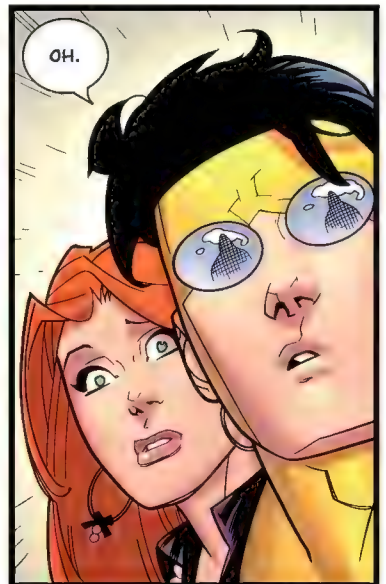
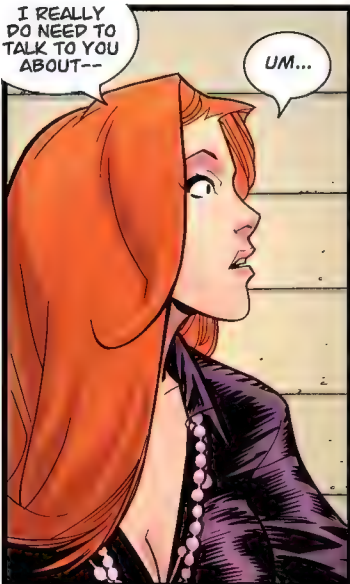
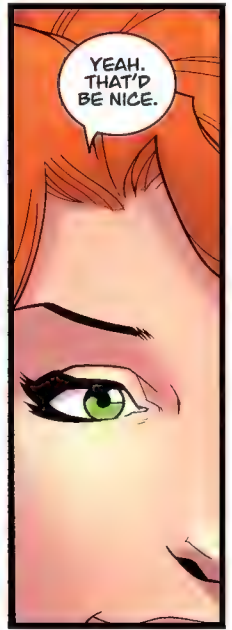
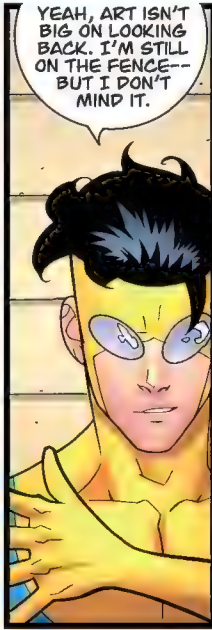
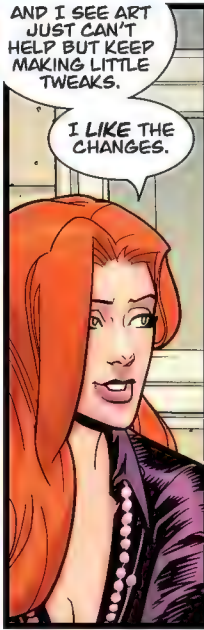
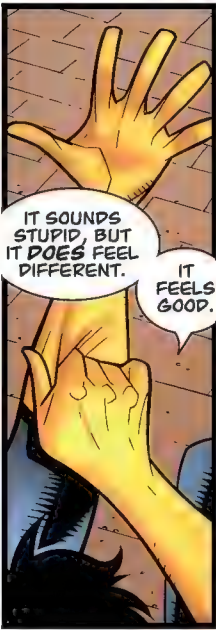
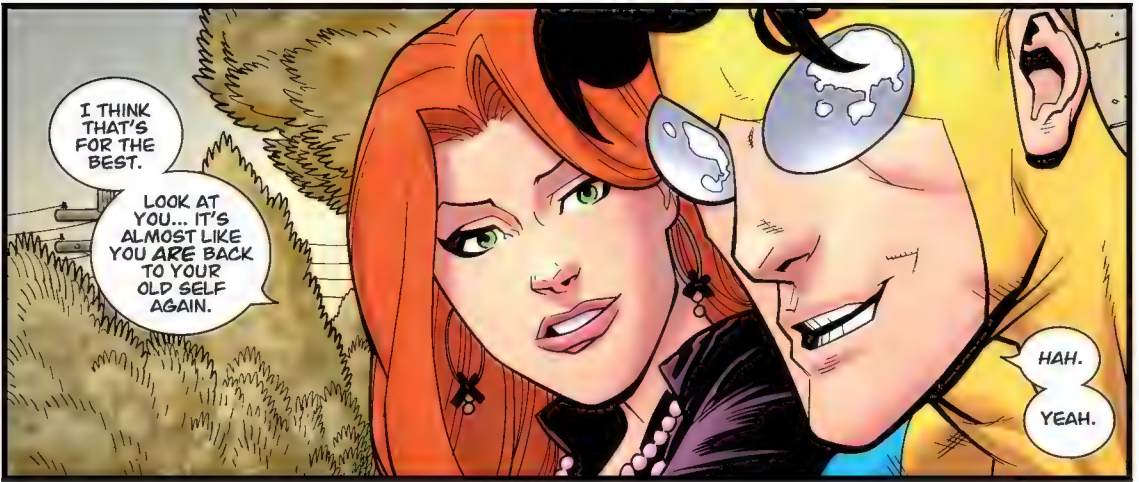
WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WHEN HE SHOWED UP.

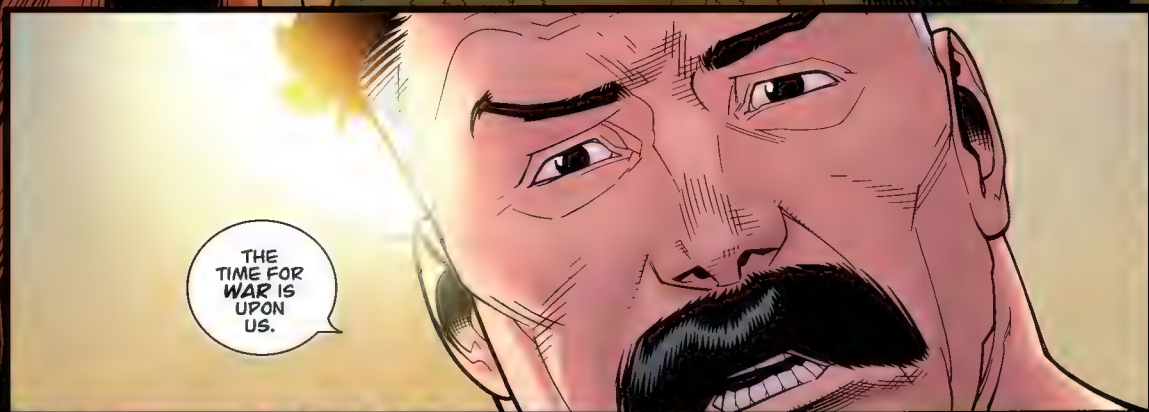
AND?

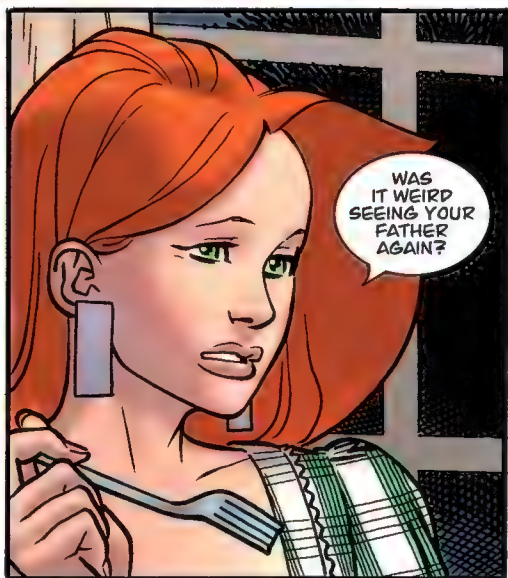
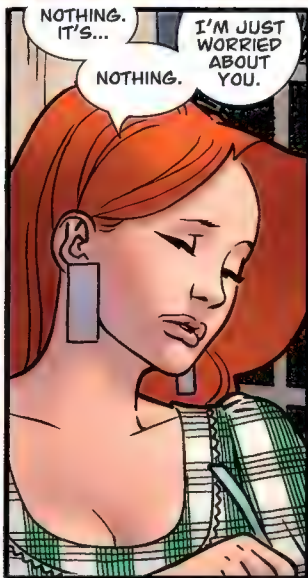
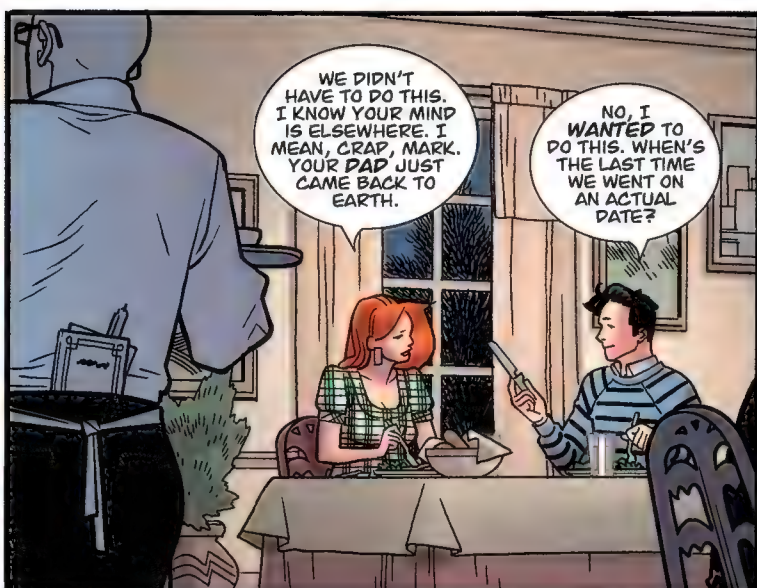



I'M DONE WITH KILLING-- IT'S TOO EASY, IT CHANGES THINGS. I'M JUST NOT CONVINCED IT'S THE ANSWER ANYMORE.

EVEN IF IT WOULD PREVENT FUTURE ATTACKS... IT SEEMS TO ALSO POTENTIALLY PREVENT GOOD THINGS.







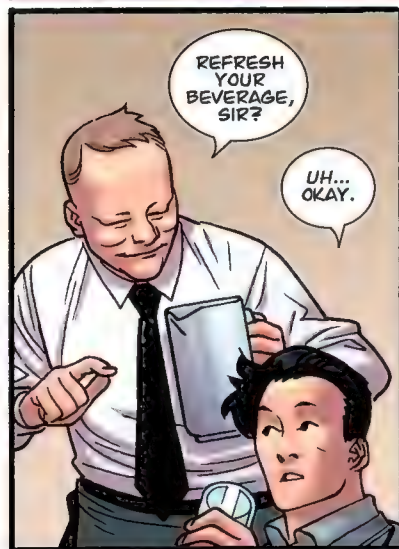
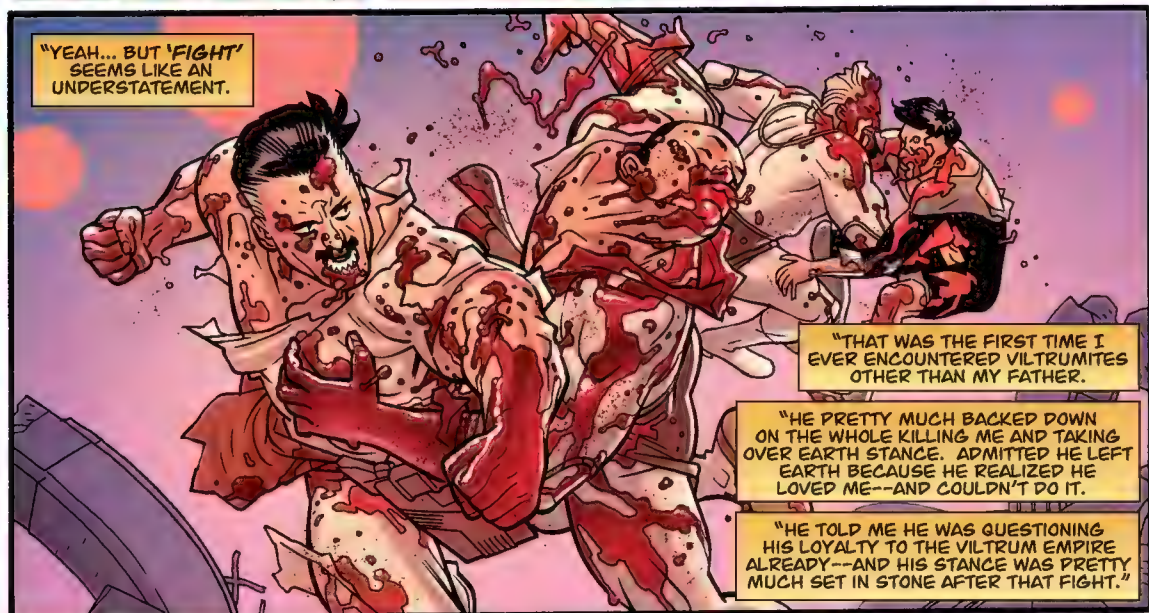
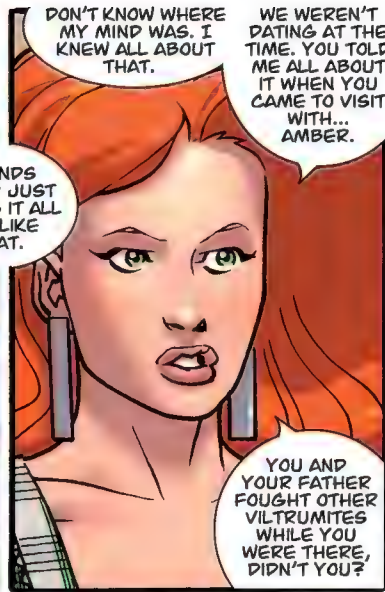


"YOU MEAN
BECAUSE HE
TRIED TO KILL
ME ONCE?"

"OR IS IT THE FACT
THAT BEFORE DOING
SO, HE REVEALED TO
ME AFTER BEING A
COMPLETELY NORMAL,
ALBEIT SUPERHERO
DAD ALL MY LIFE THAT
HE WAS ACTUALLY A
MEMBER OF AN ALIEN
RACE OUT TO CONQUER
THE UNIVERSE AND
HE WANTED MY HELP
TAKING OVER EARTH?"

"OR IS IT THAT HE TOLD ME
DURING THE FIGHT THAT HE
WAS COMPLETELY PREPARED
TO KILL ME, WAS INDIFFERENT
ABOUT THAT, AND CONSIDERED
MY MOTHER TO BE LITTLE
MORE THAN A PET?"

"OR, WELL... ALL
OF THE ABOVE?"



OKAY, SO NOW THAT WE'RE OUT OF THERE AND CAN SPEAK FREELY--YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT I KNOW NEXT TO **NOTHING** ABOUT VILTRUMITES. IT'S THIS LOOMING THREAT THAT HANGS OVER YOUR HEAD EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY AND YOU NEXT TO **NEVER** TALK ABOUT IT.



CAN YOU JUST TELL ME EVERYTHING--EVEN IF YOU THINK I ALREADY KNOW SOME OF IT?



EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT VILTRUMITES?

THIS SHOULD TAKE TWO MINUTES.

OH, WHATEVER. YOU HAVE TO KNOW **SOMETHING** ABOUT THEM.

I'M UP TO SPEED ON EVERYTHING BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR DAD AND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED WITH... CONQUEST.

IT'S ALL THE **BETWEEN** STUFF THAT I'M IN THE DARK ABOUT.

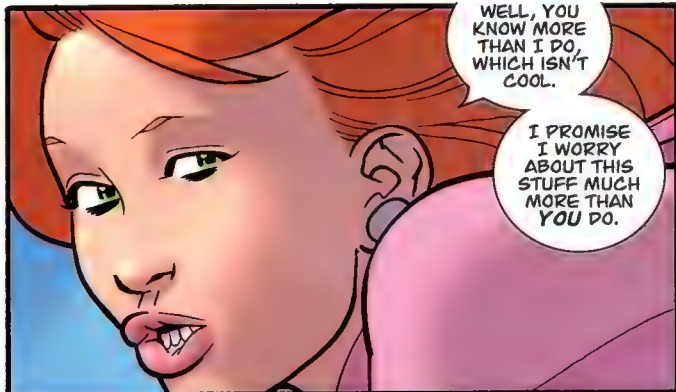
I'VE HAD BRIEF ENCOUNTERS HERE AND THERE, BUT I REALLY KNOW NEXT TO **NOTHING** ABOUT THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO THEIR LEADER IS.



WELL, YOU KNOW MORE THAN I DO, WHICH ISN'T COOL.

I PROMISE I WORRY ABOUT THIS STUFF MUCH MORE THAN YOU DO.



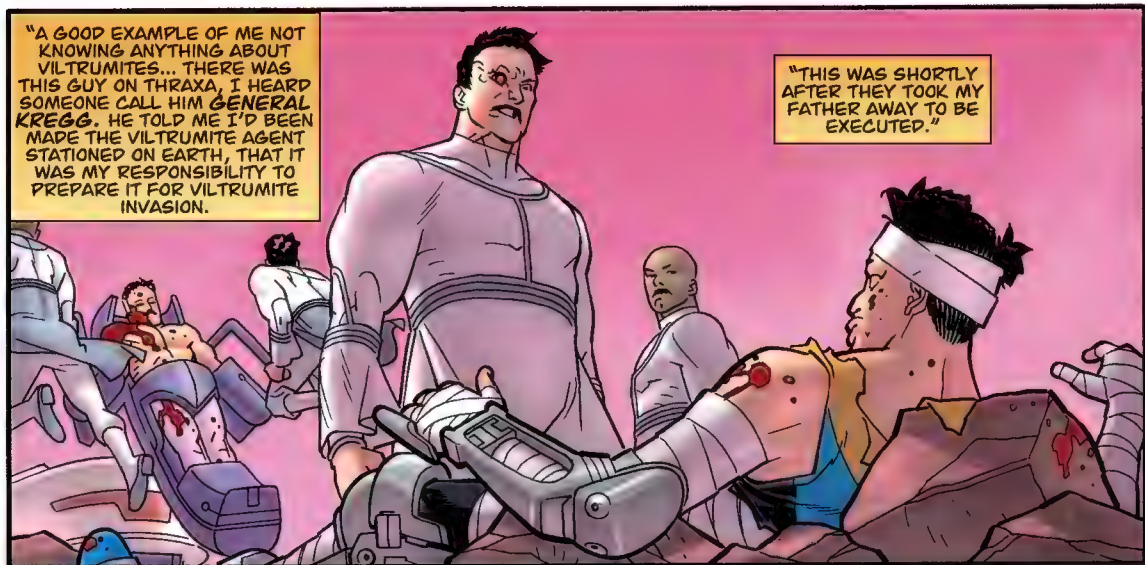
I TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT. IT'S TOO OVERWHELMING.

SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED. I THOUGHT MY DAD WAS DEAD. HE WAS SCHEDULED FOR EXECUTION.

I KNOW, IF IT'S TOO HARD TO TALK ABOUT, I UNDERSTAND.

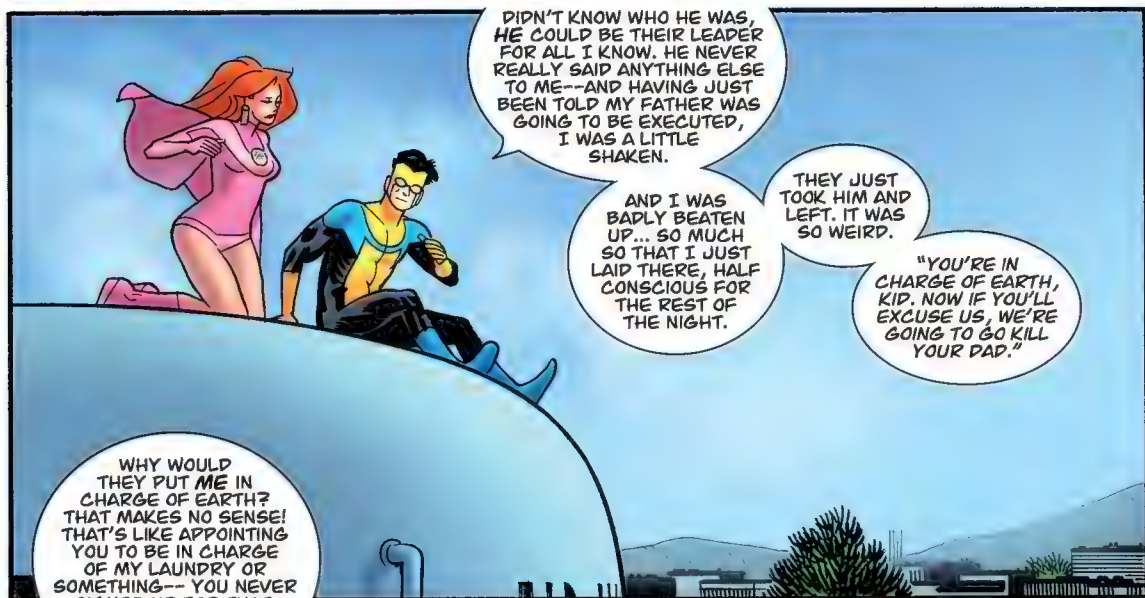
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. I DON'T WANT YOU FEELING LEFT IN THE DARK. THIS IS TOO BIG.





"A GOOD EXAMPLE OF ME NOT KNOWING ANYTHING ABOUT VILTRUMITES... THERE WAS THIS GUY ON THRAXA, I HEARD SOMEONE CALL HIM **GENERAL KREGG**. HE TOLD ME I'D BEEN MADE THE VILTRUMITE AGENT STATIONED ON EARTH, THAT IT WAS MY RESPONSIBILITY TO PREPARE IT FOR VILTRUMITE INVASION.

"THIS WAS SHORTLY AFTER THEY TOOK MY FATHER AWAY TO BE EXECUTED."



DIDN'T KNOW WHO HE WAS, HE COULD BE THEIR LEADER FOR ALL I KNOW. HE NEVER REALLY SAID ANYTHING ELSE TO ME--AND HAVING JUST BEEN TOLD MY FATHER WAS GOING TO BE EXECUTED, I WAS A LITTLE SHAKEN.

AND I WAS BADLY BEATEN UP... SO MUCH SO THAT I JUST LAID THERE, HALF CONSCIOUS FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT.

THEY JUST TOOK HIM AND LEFT. IT WAS SO WEIRD.

"YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF EARTH, KIP. NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US, WE'RE GOING TO GO KILL YOUR DAD."

WHY WOULD THEY PUT ME IN CHARGE OF EARTH? THAT MAKES NO SENSE! THAT'S LIKE APPOINTING YOU TO BE IN CHARGE OF MY LAUNDRY OR SOMETHING-- YOU NEVER SIGNED UP FOR THAT. IT'S SOMETHING I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO DO.



BUT YOUR DAD'S OKAY... AND HE'S TOTALLY GONE "GOOD GUY" NOW. HE'S FIGHTING FOR THIS COALITION OF PLANETS THING?

HIS SPINE WAS BROKEN ON THRAXA. THERE'S SOME CREEPY VILTRUMITE LAW WHERE YOU CAN'T BE EXECUTED UNLESS YOU'RE COMPLETELY WHOLE... IN PERFECT CONDITION.

IN THE TIME IT TOOK HIM TO HEAL, ALLEN FOUND HIS WAY TO HIM AND HELPED HIM ESCAPE.

THEY'RE LIKE BEST FRIENDS NOW.

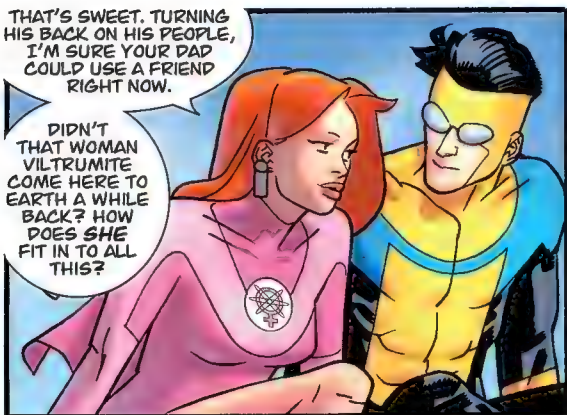
THAT'S COOL.

I'M CURIOUS, THOUGH? HOW DID YOUR DAD ESCAPE?

THESE ARE MY PEOPLE.

THAT'S SWEET. TURNING HIS BACK ON HIS PEOPLE, I'M SURE YOUR DAD COULD USE A FRIEND RIGHT NOW.

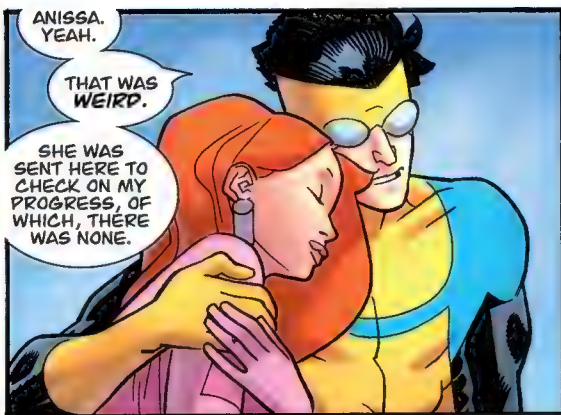
DIDN'T THAT WOMAN VILTRUMITE COME HERE TO EARTH A WHILE BACK? HOW DOES SHE FIT IN TO ALL THIS?



ANISSA. YEAH.

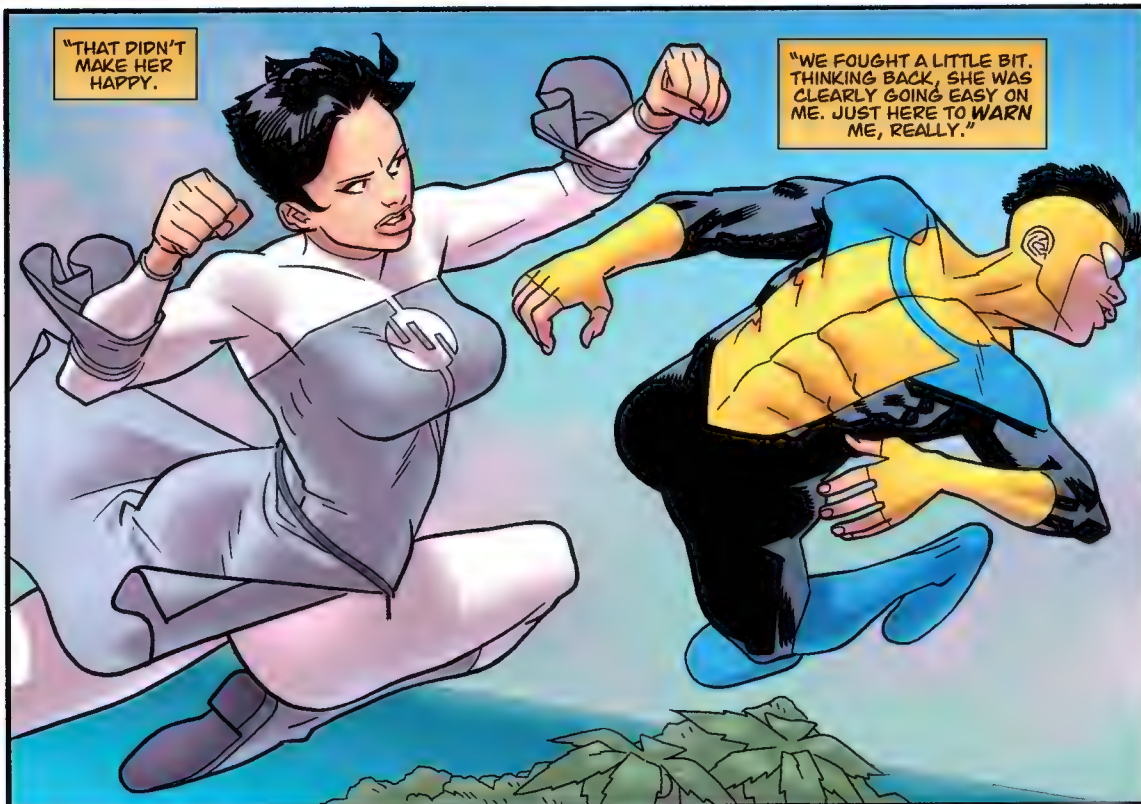
THAT WAS WEIRD.

SHE WAS SENT HERE TO CHECK ON MY PROGRESS, OF WHICH, THERE WAS NONE.



"THAT DIDN'T MAKE HER HAPPY.

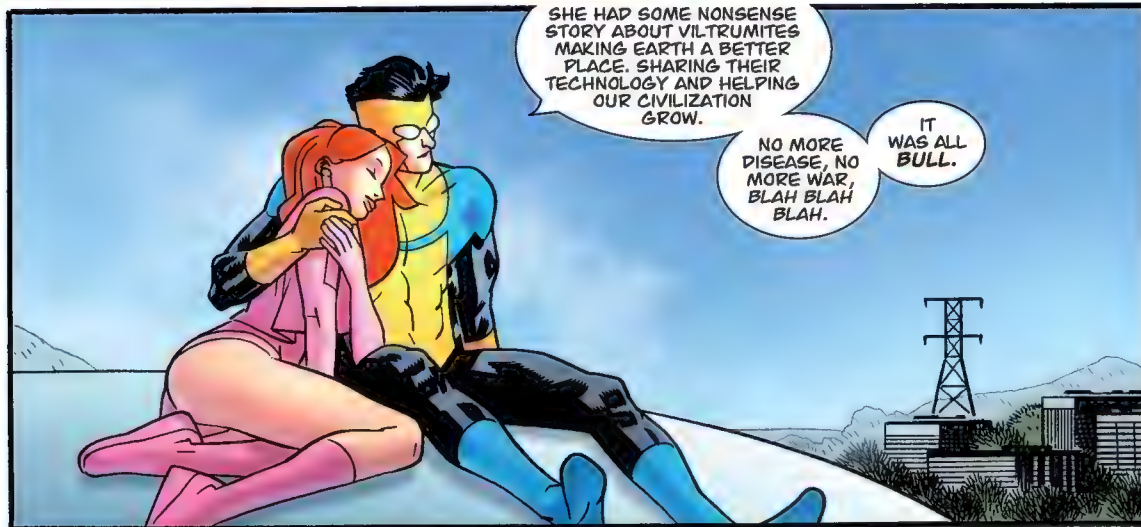
"WE FOUGHT A LITTLE BIT. THINKING BACK, SHE WAS CLEARLY GOING EASY ON ME. JUST HERE TO WARN ME, REALLY."

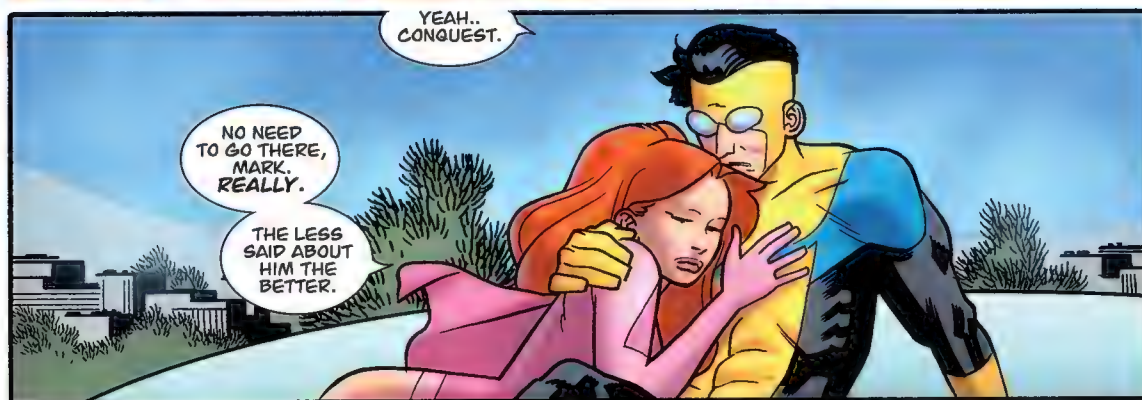
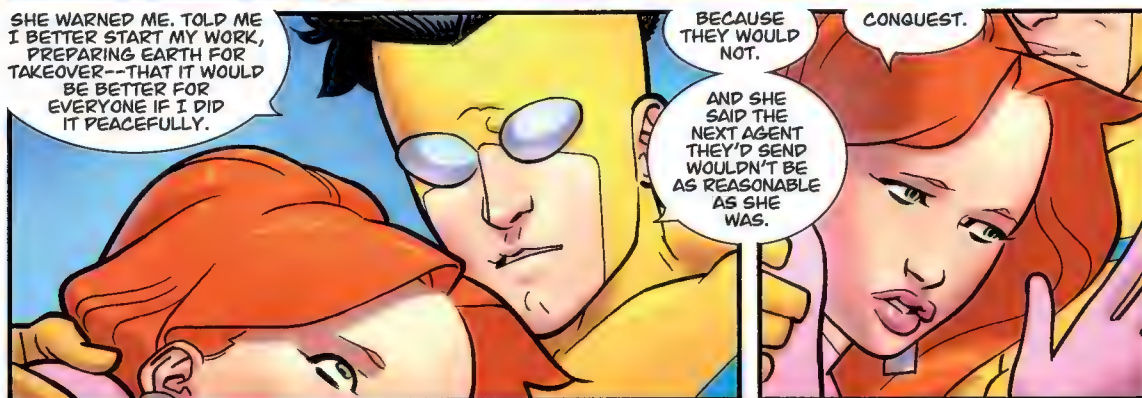


SHE HAD SOME NONSENSE STORY ABOUT VILTRUMITES MAKING EARTH A BETTER PLACE. SHARING THEIR TECHNOLOGY AND HELPING OUR CIVILIZATION GROW.

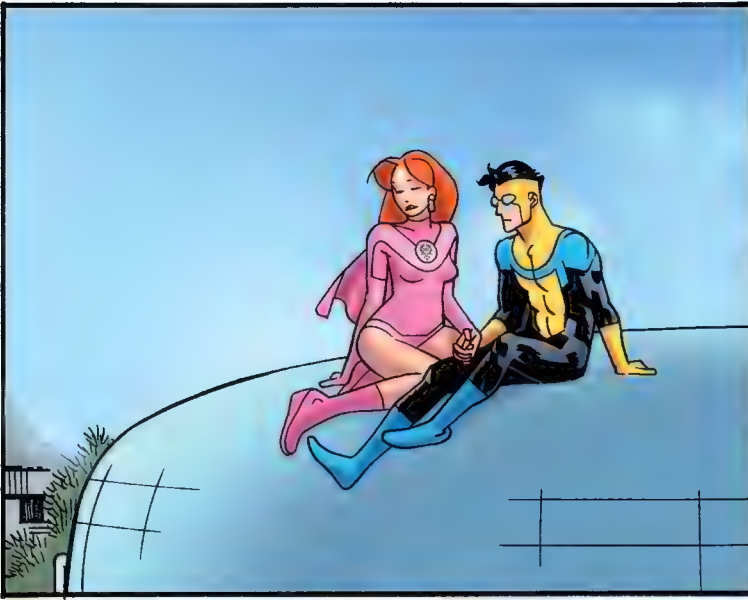
NO MORE DISEASE, NO MORE WAR, BLAH BLAH BLAH.

IT WAS ALL BULL.









MY DAD TELLS ME THEIR NUMBERS ARE ASTONISHINGLY LOW. SOME VIRUS HAS DWINDLED THEIR POPULATION DOWN TO NEXT TO NOTHING.

SO THE BATTLE, ACCORDING TO THE COALITION OF PLANETS, IS VERY WINNABLE.

MY DAD HAS BEEN WORKING WITH ALLEN THE ALIEN, GATHERING THE THINGS LISTED IN HIS BOOKS THAT CAN BE USED AGAINST THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

HE SAYS NOW IS THE TIME TO STRIKE.

A close-up of the man's face. He is wearing a yellow mask with a white visor. He has a slight smile and is looking down. The background is a clear blue sky.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

A close-up of the woman's face. She has long red hair and is wearing a pink jumpsuit. She is looking up at the man with a questioning expression. The background is a clear blue sky.

THEY'VE SINGLED OUT EARTH BECAUSE OF OUR COMPATIBLE PNA... THAT'S THE RESOURCE THEY WANT FROM US. WE'RE A WAY FOR THEM TO RESTORE THEIR POPULATION.

I WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE IN THIS BATTLE. I'M JUST GLAD MY FATHER IS ON MY SIDE.

A close-up of the man's face. He is wearing a yellow mask with a white visor. He is looking down with a slight smile. The background is a clear blue sky.

DO YOU TRUST HIM?

A close-up of the woman's face. She has long red hair and is wearing a pink jumpsuit. She is looking up at the man with a questioning expression. The background is a clear blue sky.



IT'S WEIRD. I'VE KNOWN HIM ALL MY LIFE TO BE THIS GOOD PERSON, **OMNI-MAN**, DEFENDER OF DEMOCRACY... AND I CAN'T CONVINCE MYSELF ALL THAT WAS AN ACT.

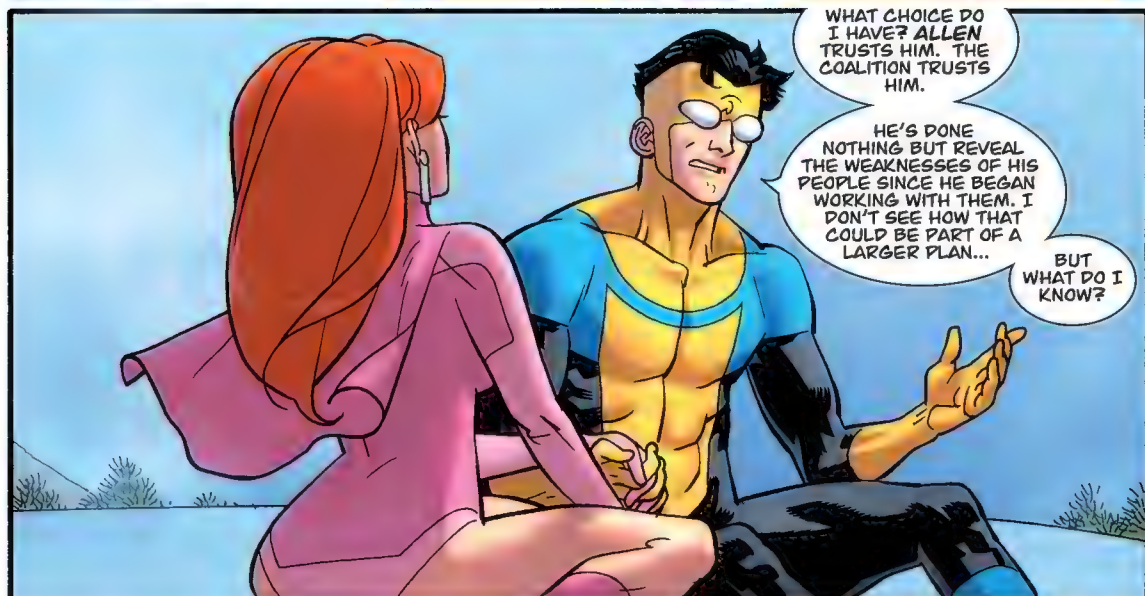
THE KINDNESS HE SHOWED ME, THE LOVE BETWEEN A FATHER AND SON, IT ALL SEEMED SO REAL, SO NORMAL. SO I BELIEVE THAT IT WAS.

THE BAD PARTS, HIM TRYING TO TAKE OVER, FIGHTING ME... IT WAS SUCH A BRIEF PERIOD. HE SEEMS BACK TO NORMAL AGAIN.



THEN AGAIN, HE'S BEEN ALIVE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THE ENTIRETY OF HIS TIME WITH ME MUST SEEM LIKE THE BLINK OF AN EYE TO HIM.

SO... I DON'T KNOW.



WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE? **ALLEN** TRUSTS HIM. THE COALITION TRUSTS HIM.

HE'S DONE NOTHING BUT REVEAL THE WEAKNESSES OF HIS PEOPLE SINCE HE BEGAN WORKING WITH THEM. I DON'T SEE HOW THAT COULD BE PART OF A LARGER PLAN...

BUT WHAT DO I KNOW?



WE'RE SUPPOSED TO LEAVE TOMORROW. I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'LL BE GONE AND I WON'T HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH EARTH.

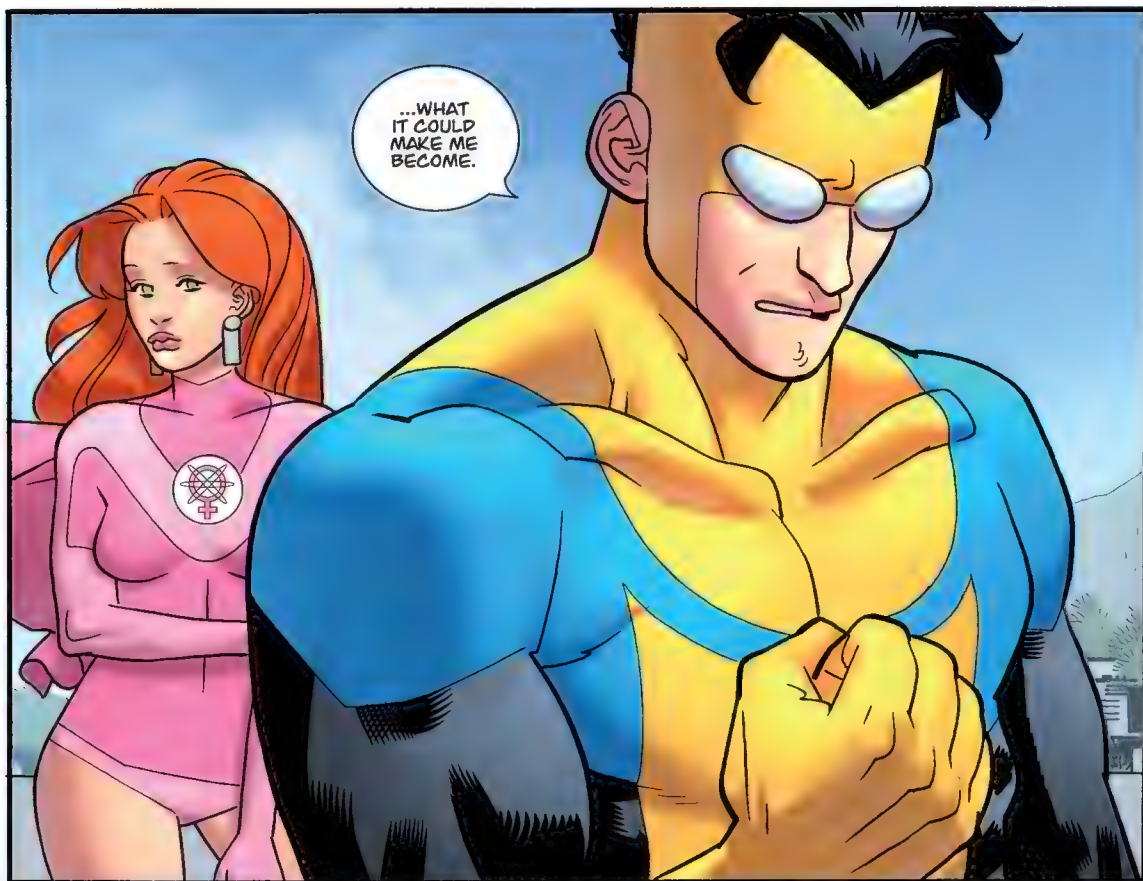
BUT THIS IS SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO-- FOR THE SAKE OF THE WHOLE PLANET.



I KNOW. I UNDERSTAND.

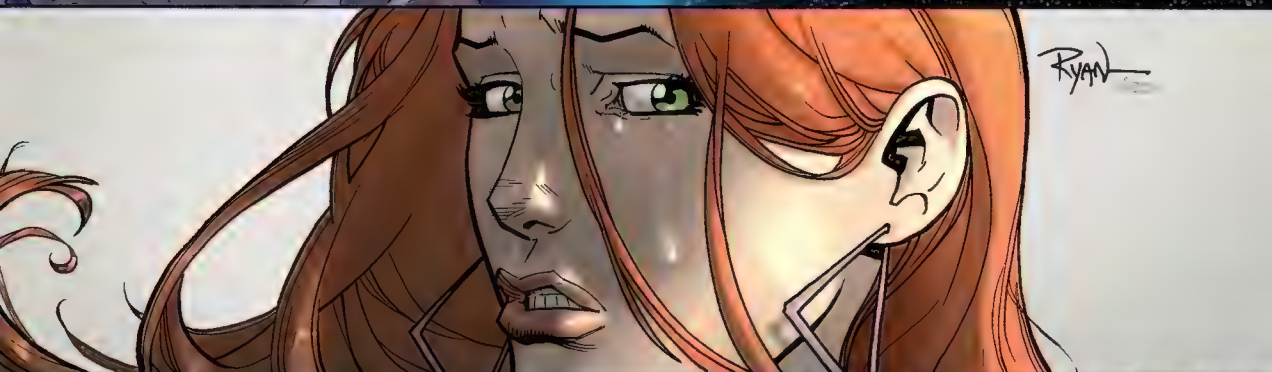
I--

I'LL HOLD DOWN THE FORT WHILE YOU'RE GONE.





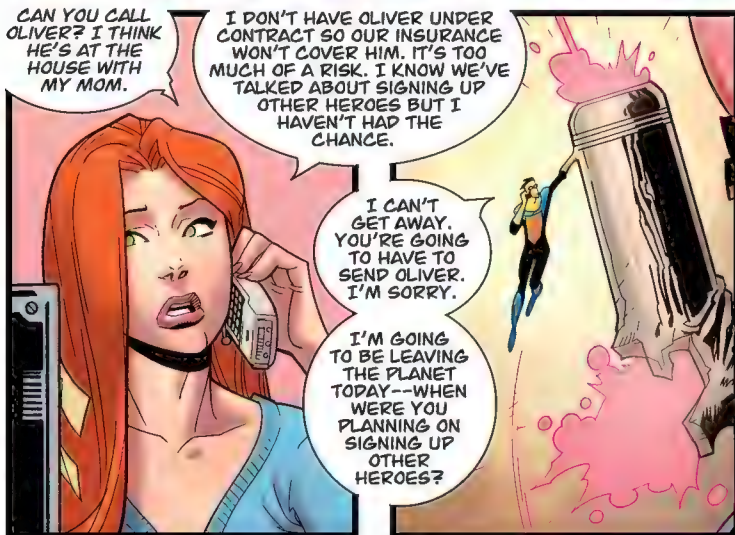
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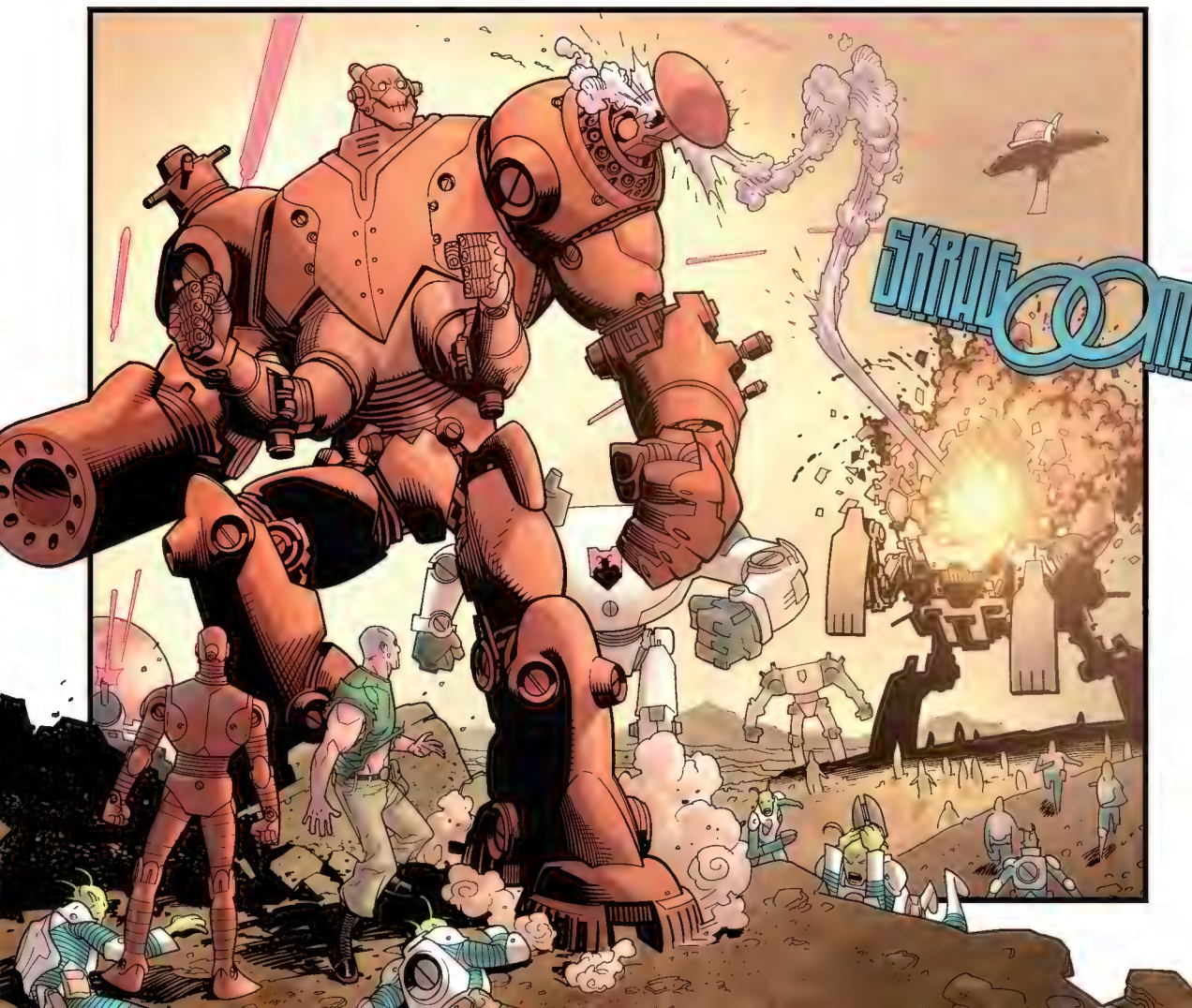
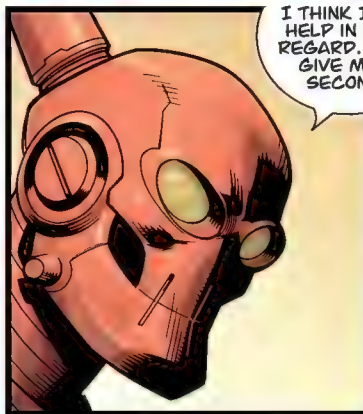


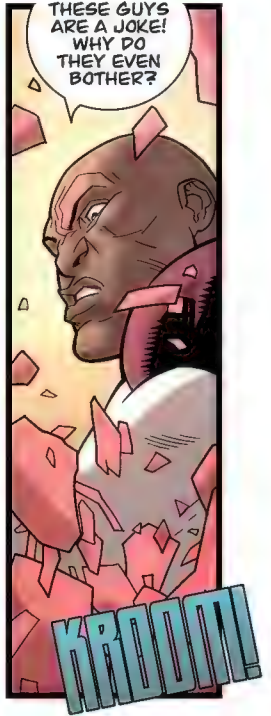
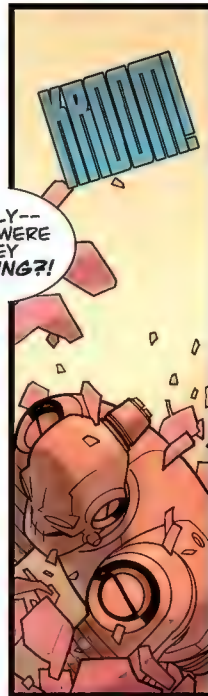
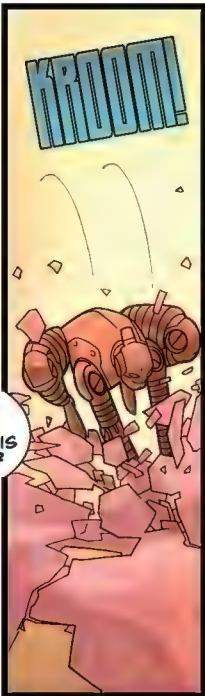
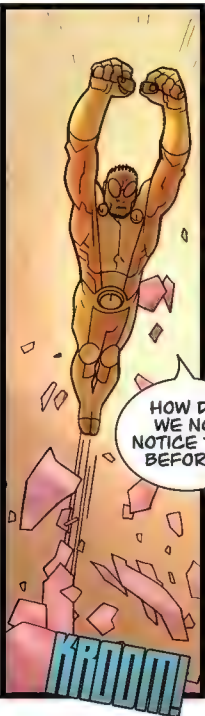
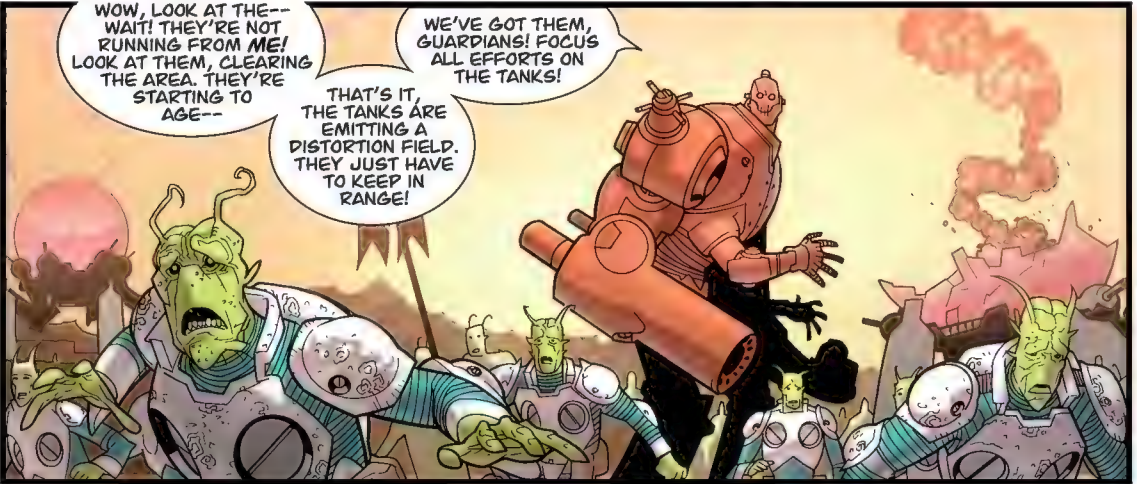
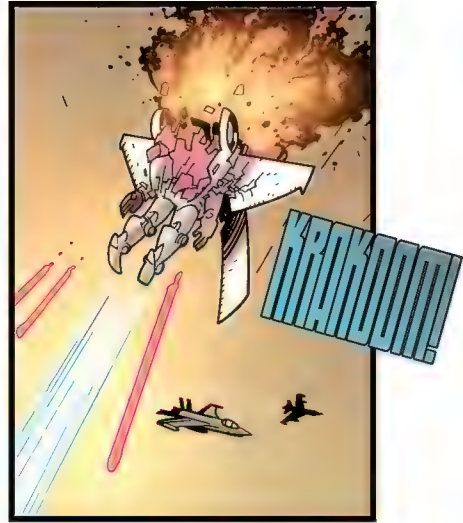
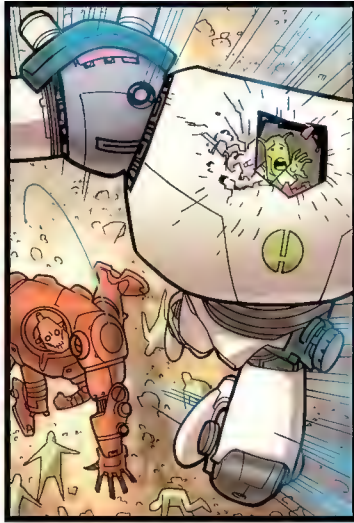
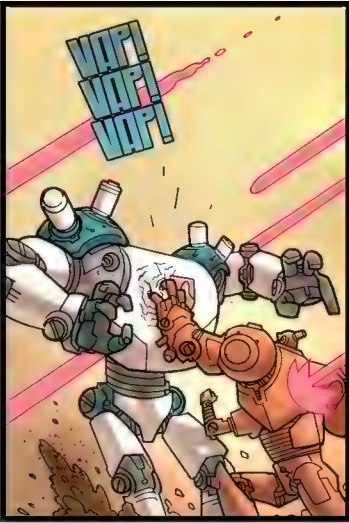


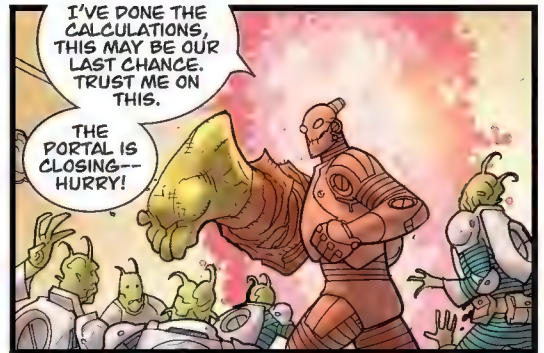
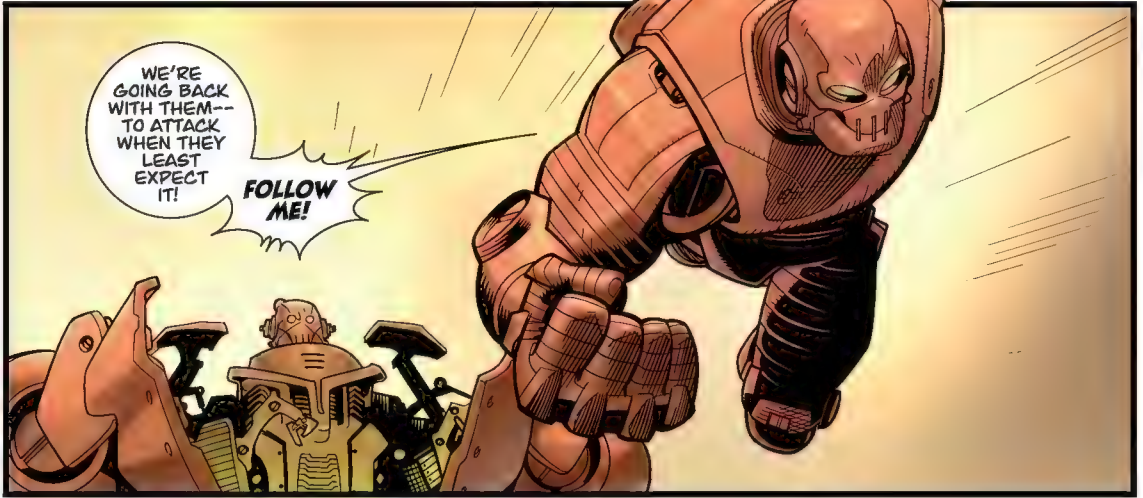
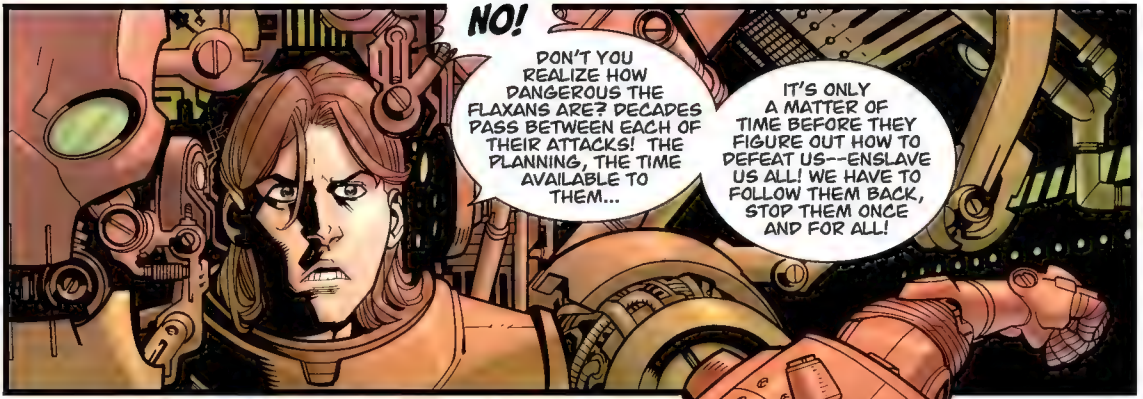
ARRE!!
ARRE!!

YOU'RE
KIDDING
ME!













WHAT ABOUT YOUR WIFE? YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO SEE HER WHILE YOU'RE HERE?

I COULDN'T. I WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. I'VE PUT HER THROUGH SO MUCH... LET'S JUST FIND THIS BOY AND GET OFF THIS PLANET.

TOO MANY BAD MEMORIES.

WELL, I CERTAINLY DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD TAKE THIS LONG TO FIND THIS TECH JACKET EITHER. HE AND HIS FAMILY JUST DISAPPEARED AT SOME POINT A WHILE BACK.

I WAS ABLE TO DISCOVER THIS HOUSE, OWNED BY THE BOY'S GRANDFATHER. MAYBE HE'LL KNOW WHERE THEY ARE.

THIS IS OUR LAST CHANCE, IF WE DON'T FIND HIM HERE--I DON'T CARE HOW POWERFUL THE GELDARIANS SAID HE WAS--WE'RE LEAVING WITHOUT HIM.

UNDERSTOOD.

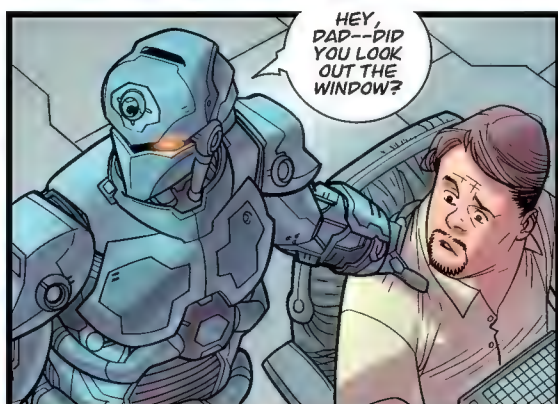
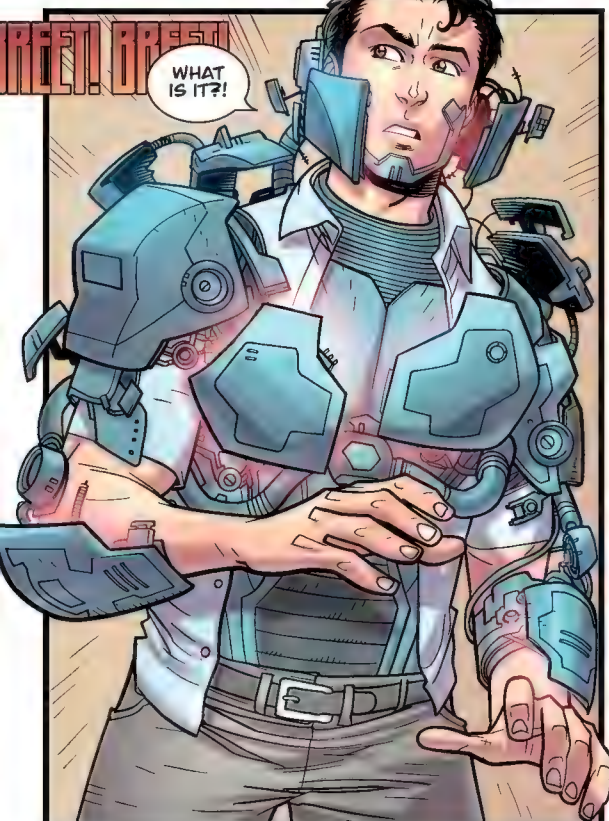
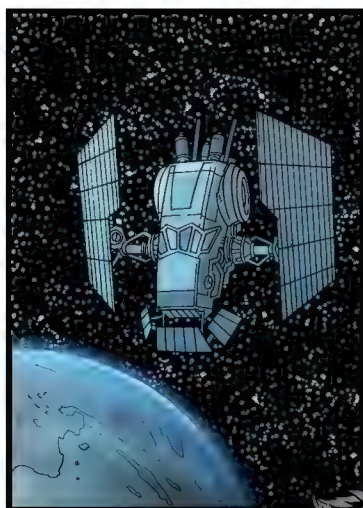
YOU LOOKING FOR THE THOMPSON BOY? CALLS HIMSELF TECH JACKET? WHAT AM I SAYING--OF COURSE YOU ARE.

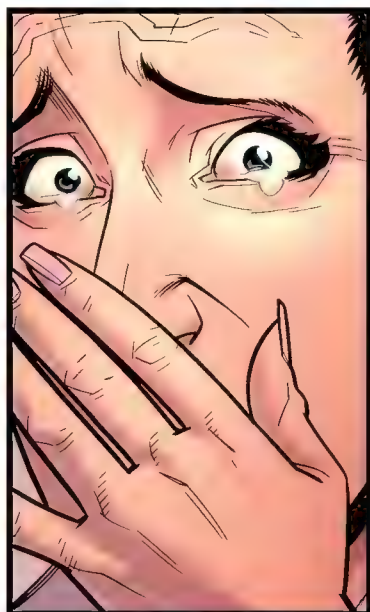
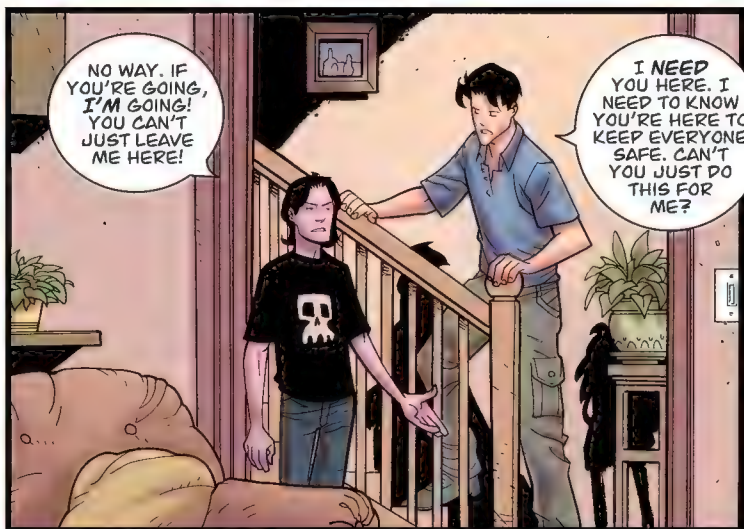
HE'S PROBABLY UP IN HIS SPACE STATION. THEY DON'T SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN THE HOUSE.

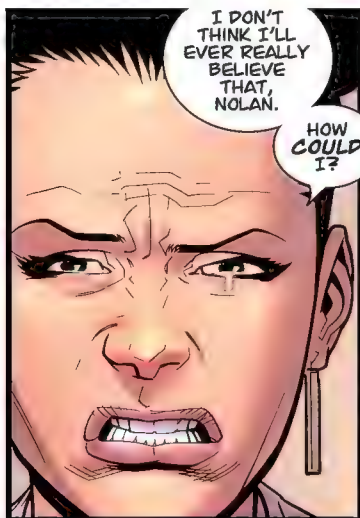
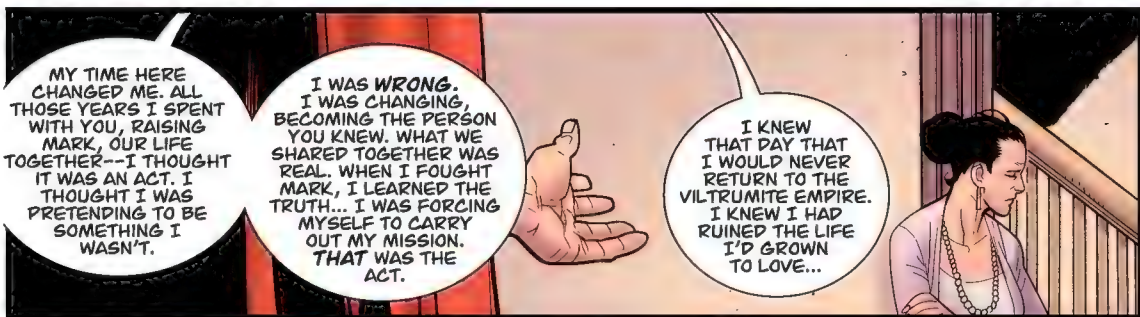
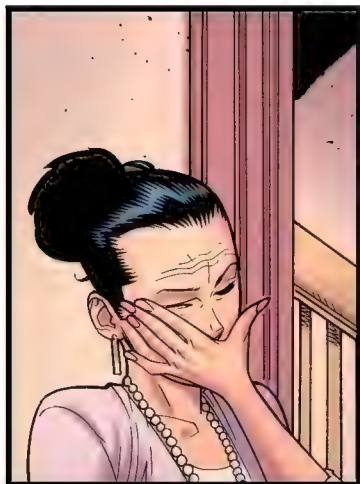
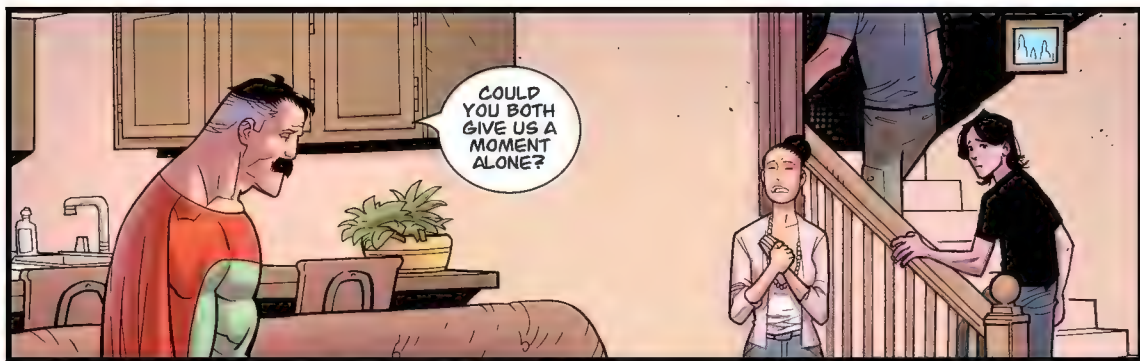
OUR APPEARANCE DOESN'T ALARM YOU?

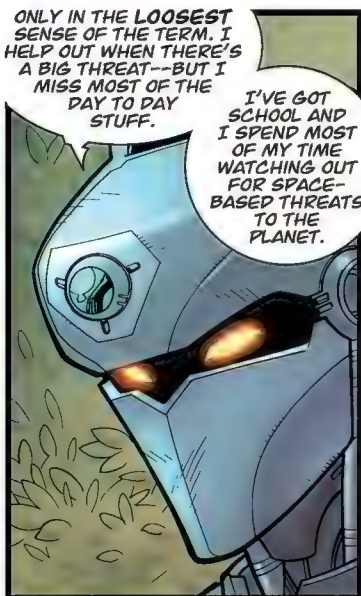
SEEN STRANGER, THAT'S FOR SURE...

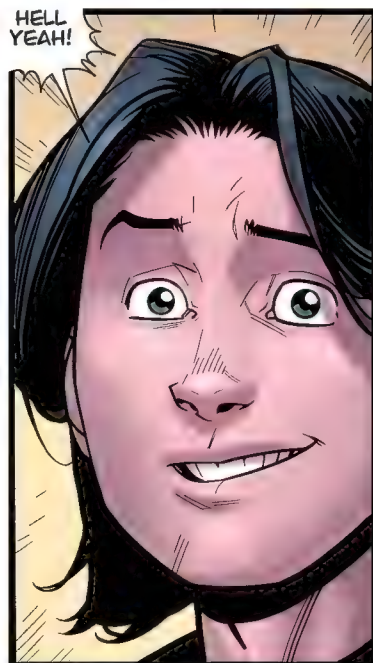
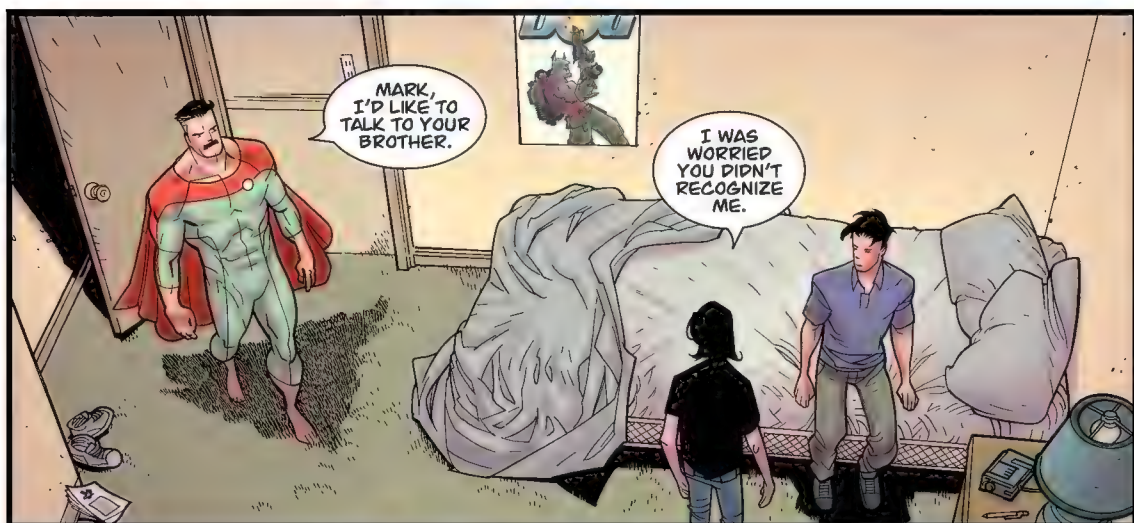
...AND THE BAD GUYS DON'T KNOCK FIRST.

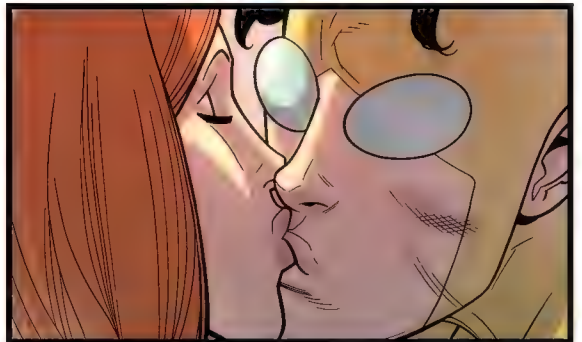
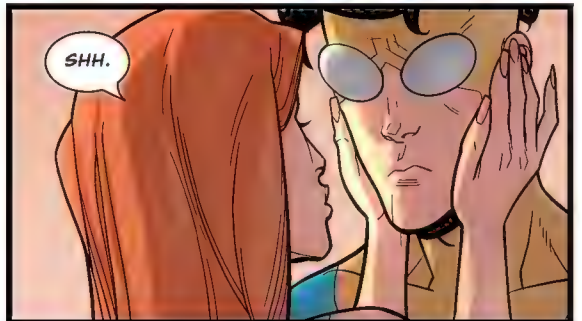
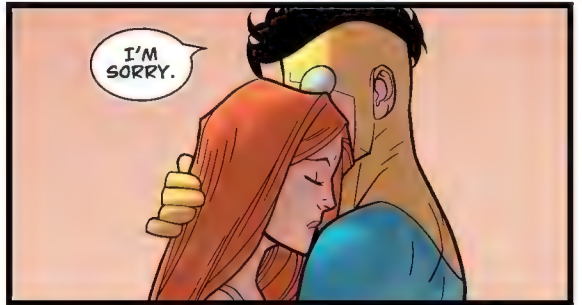
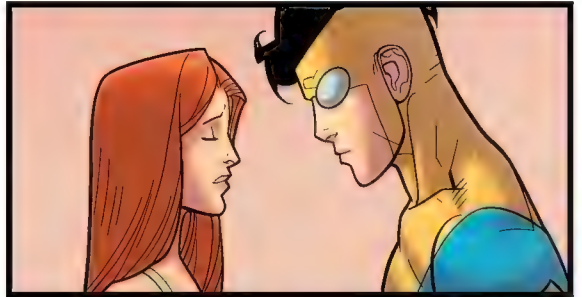
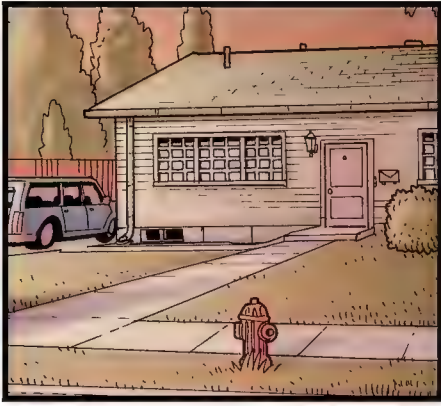


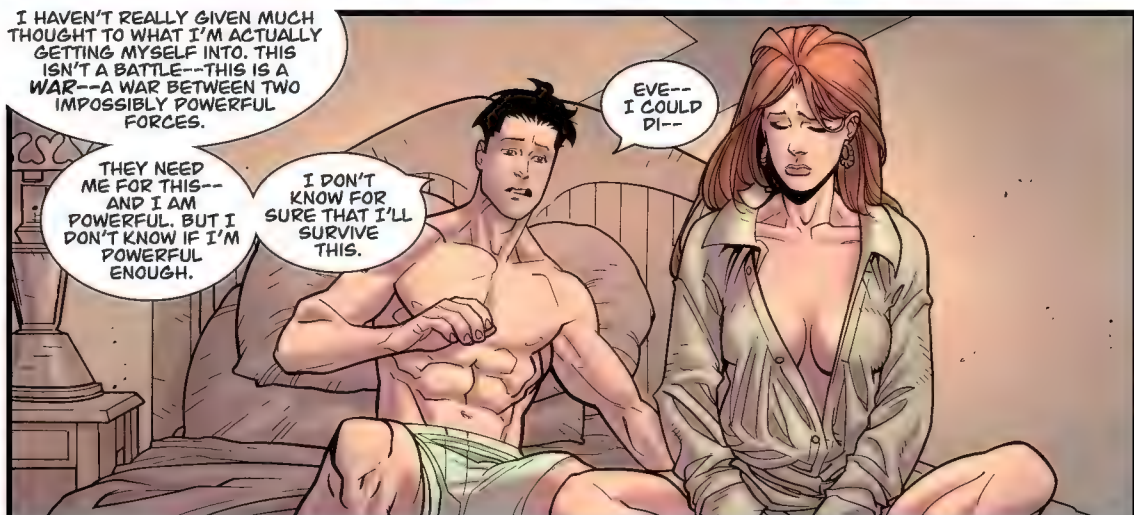
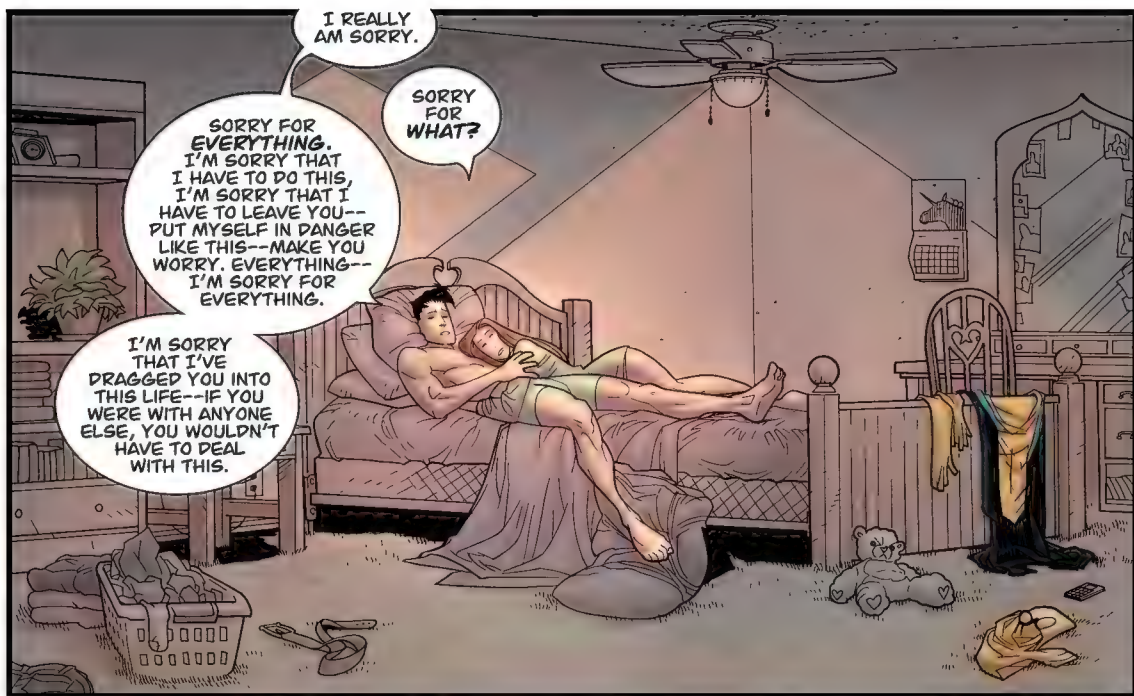


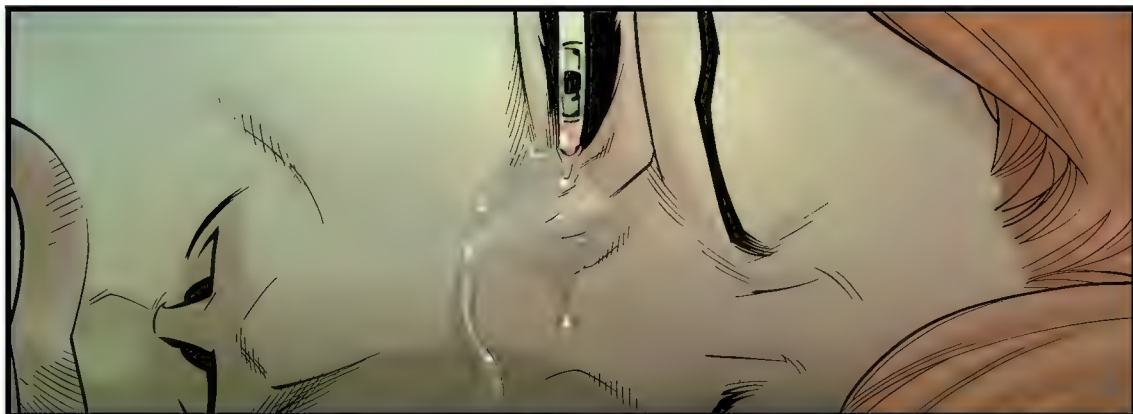
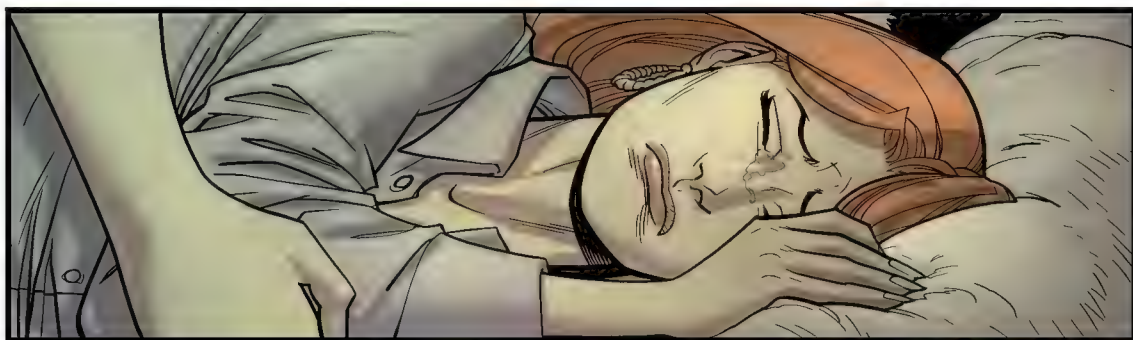


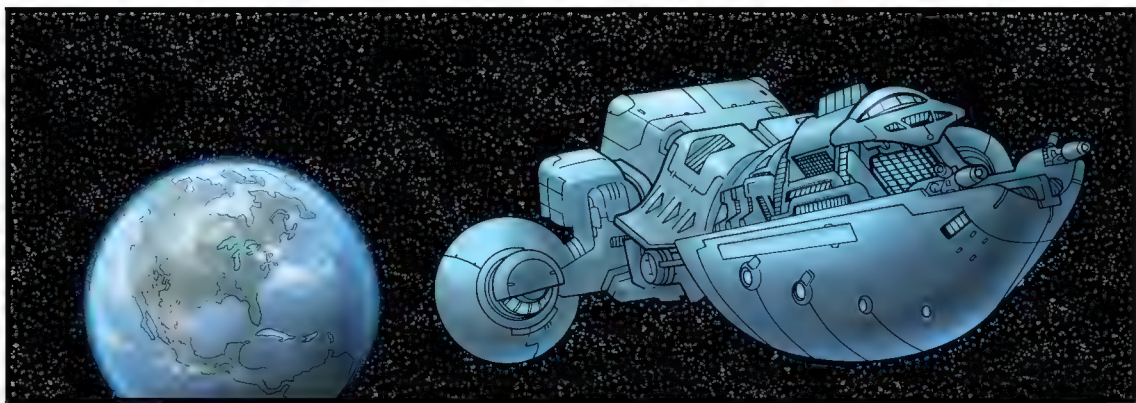












TO BE HONEST, I KIND OF FIGURED WE'D JUST BE FLYING THERE OURSELVES.

I'D RATHER WE HAD. I REQUESTED ANY SHIP BUT **THIS** ONE. THE CREW IS PATHETIC. STILL, EVEN WITH OUR ABILITIES, IT'S DIFFICULT TO TRAVEL THIS KIND OF DISTANCE WITHOUT A SHIP.

WE CAN ONLY HOLD OUR BREATH FOR SO LONG.

TAKE THESE EARPIECES. KEEP THEM IN AT ALL TIMES. IT WILL ALLOW US TO SPEAK TELEPATHICALLY TO EACH OTHER IN SPACE. IT'S SIMILAR TO WHAT ALLEN USES. IF WE DON'T ALL HAVE THEM, THE DISCUSSION ONLY WORKS ONE WAY.

NEAT. ALWAYS WONDERED ABOUT THAT.

WAIT, HOW LONG CAN WE HOLD OUR BREATH?

SORRY, I HAVEN'T GOTTEN AROUND TO TEACHING HIM THAT.

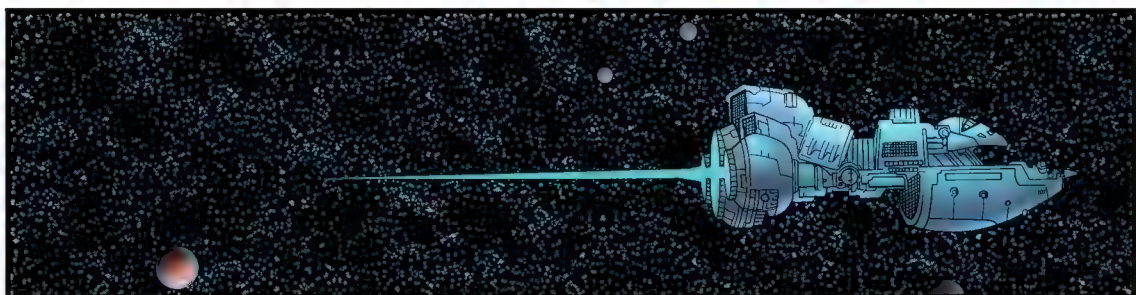
I'VE BEEN A LITTLE PREOCCUPIED AS OF LATE.

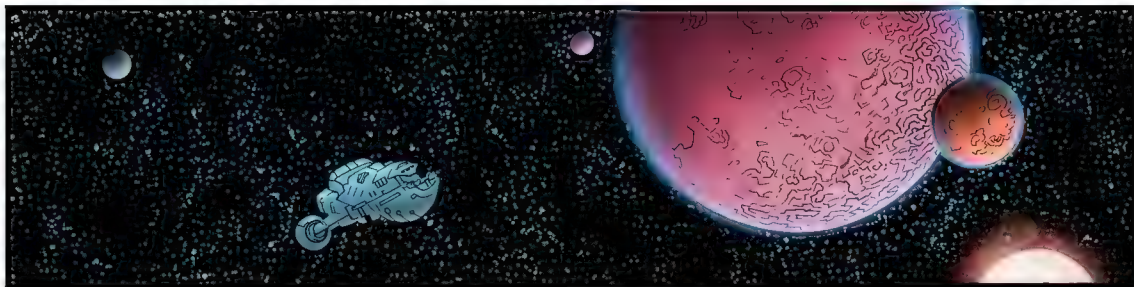
I SAW THAT. SHE'S VERY PRETTY.

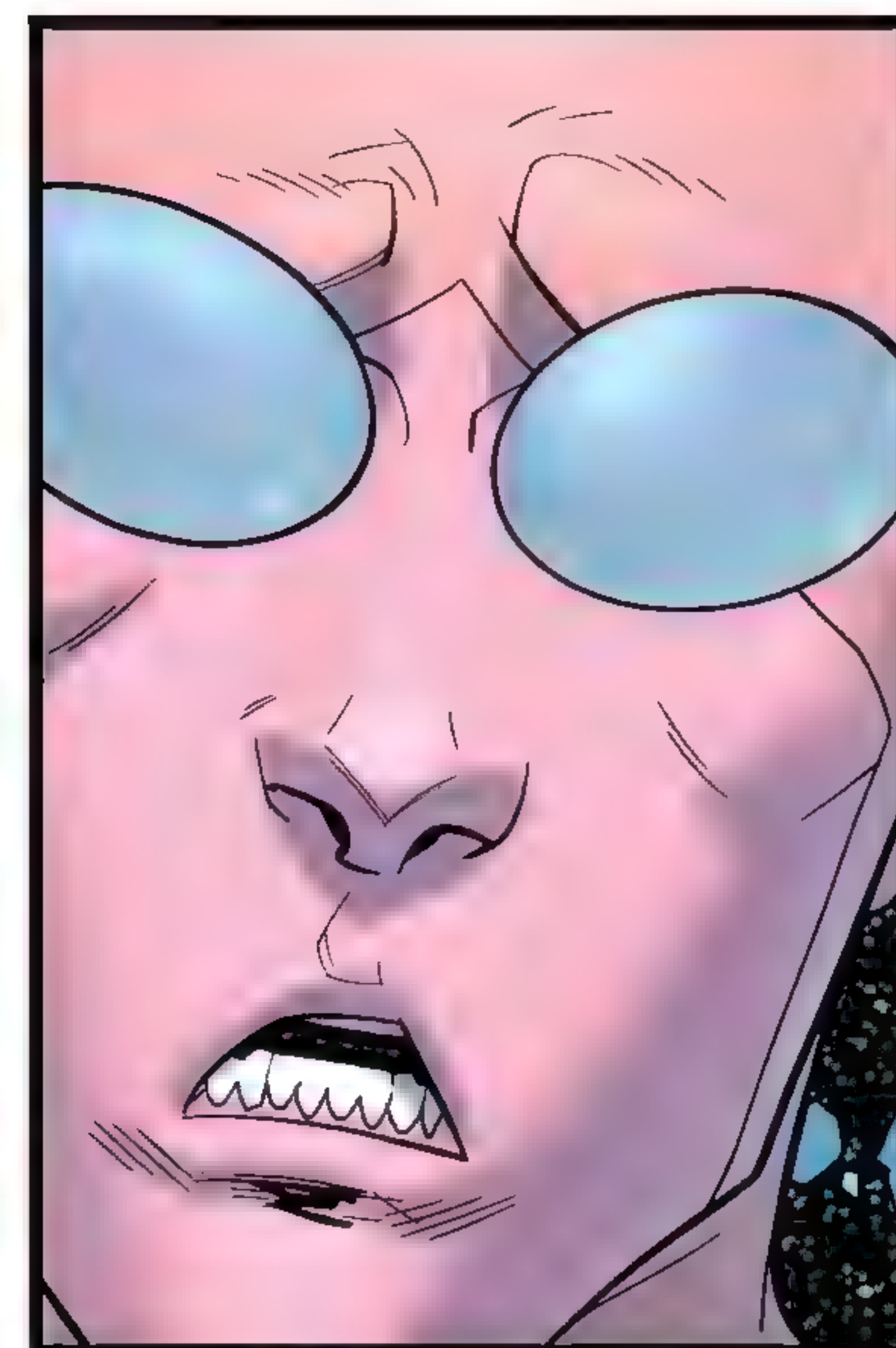
THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

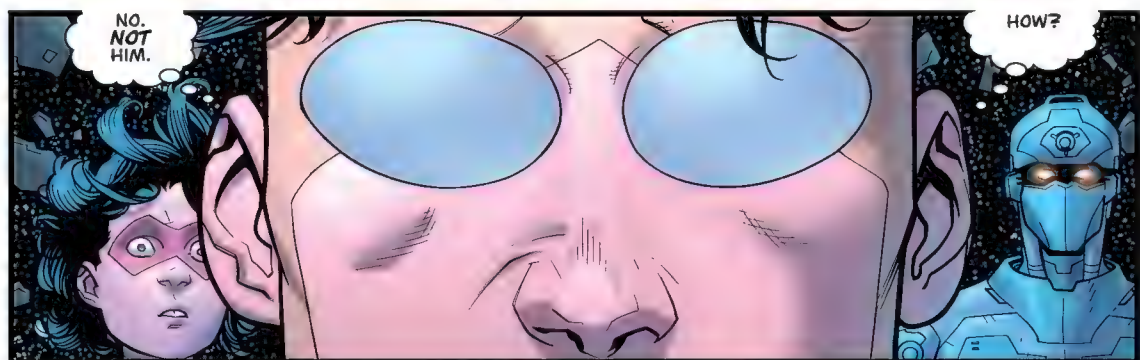
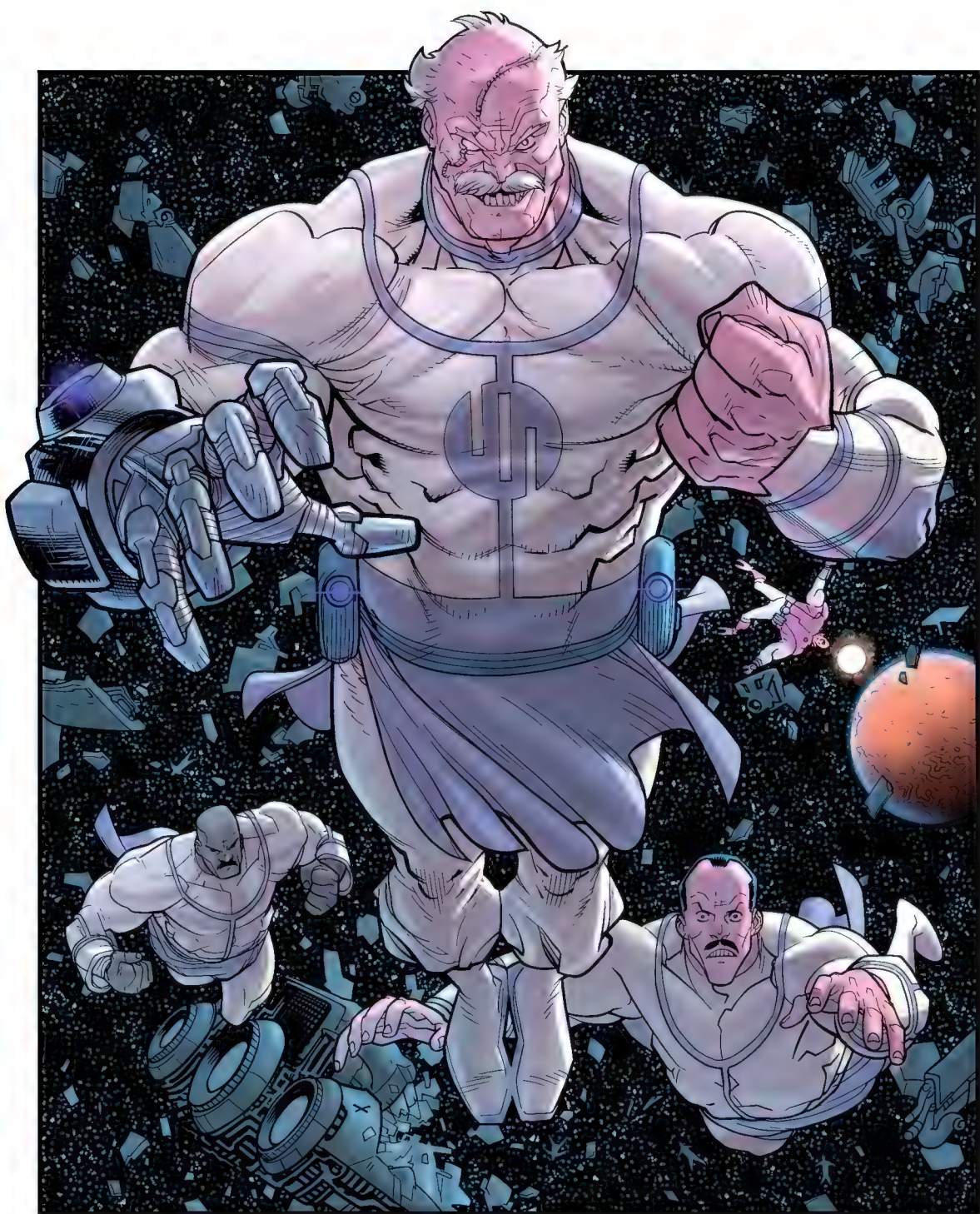
HAH.

SO SERIOUSLY-- I CAN HOLD MY BREATH FOR A LONG TIME?









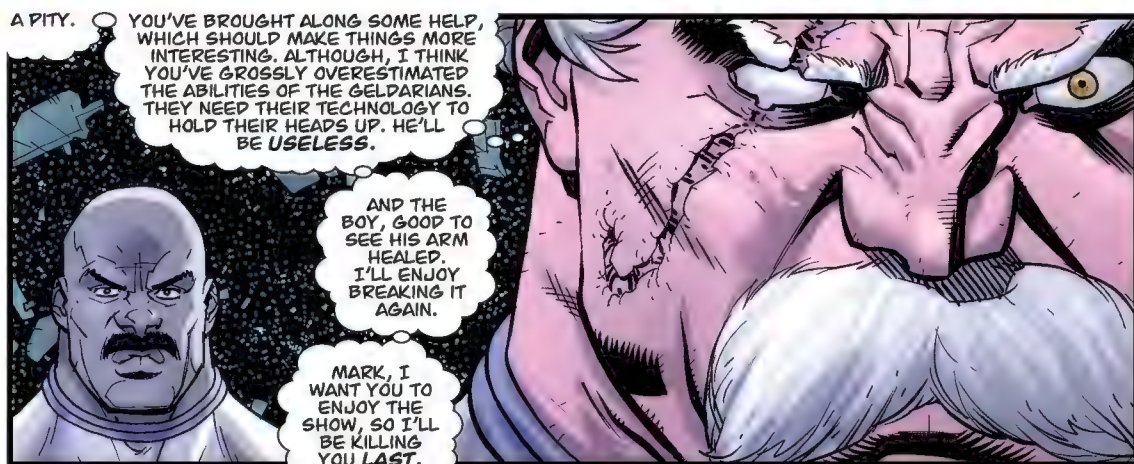
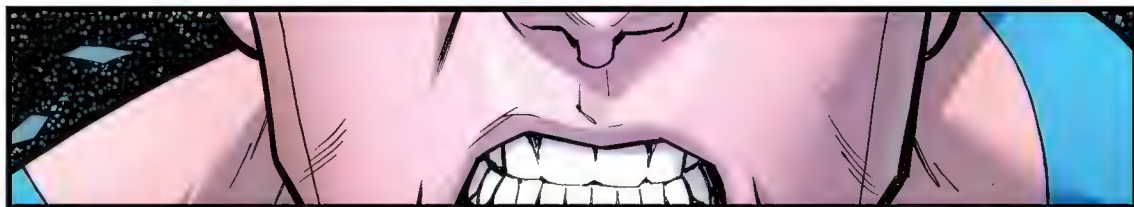
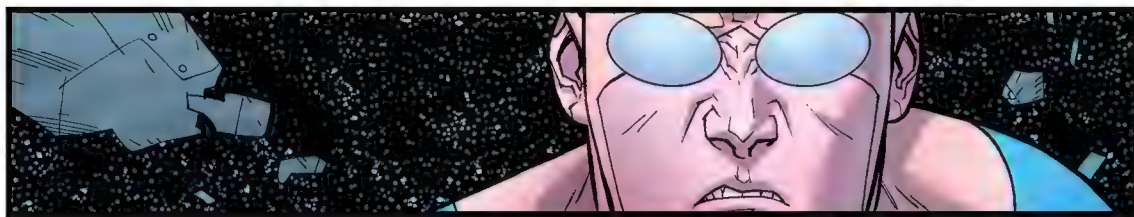
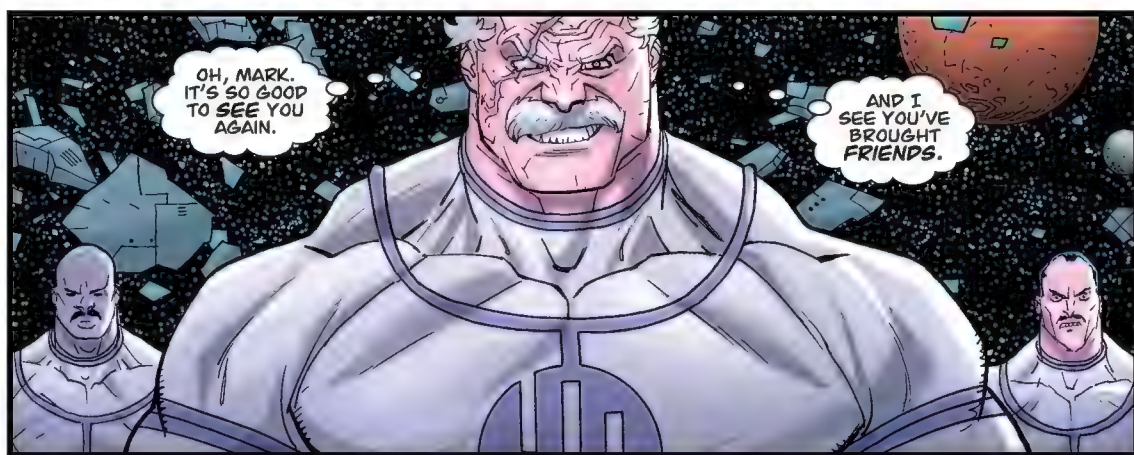
NO.
NOT
HIM.

HOW?



CHAPTER 72









DID I
BLACK
OUT?

HOW
DID THAT
HAPPEN?

OH, NO--
THIS ISN'T
GOOD!



SERIOUSLY!
WHATEVER HELP
ANYONE CAN
MUSTER--
I'LL GLADLY
ACCEPT!

HE'S
SHRUGGING
OFF WHATEVER
I THROW AT
HIM!

FOOLISH
GELPARIAN.



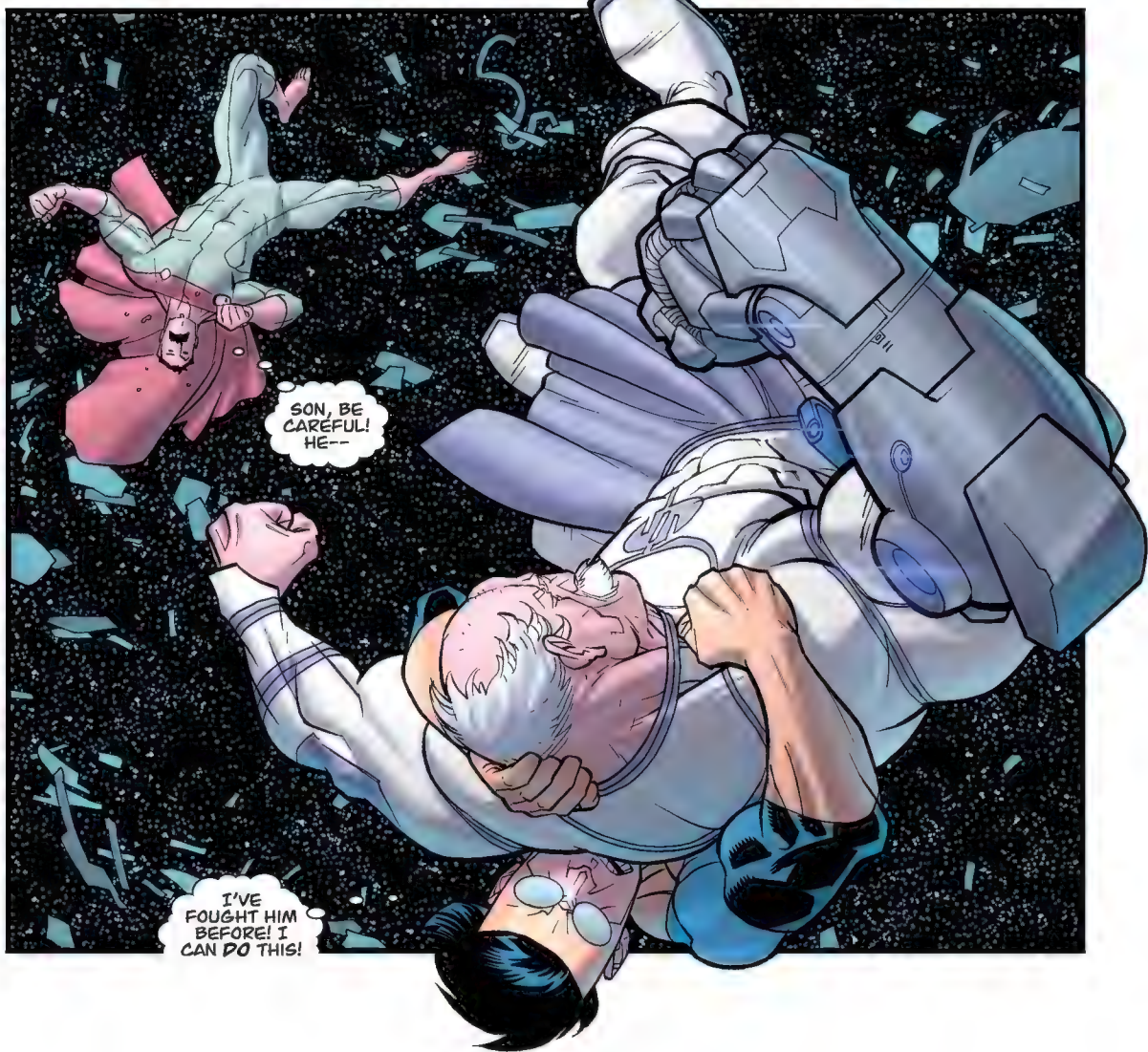
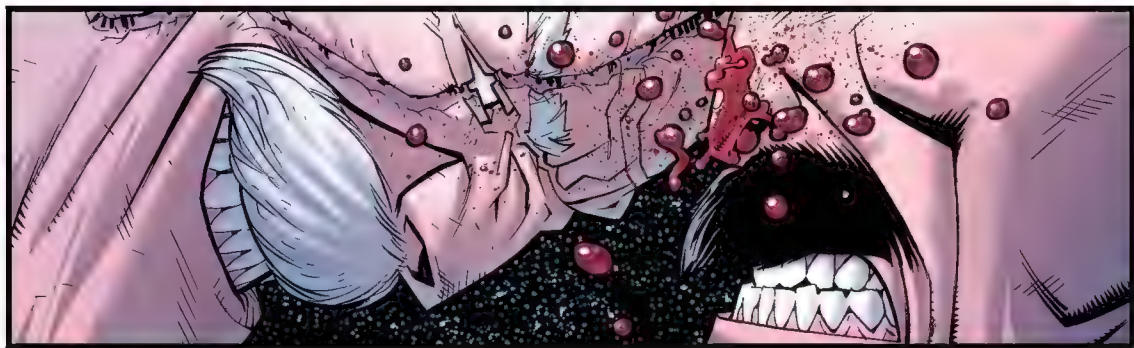
WAIT--
THAT
DID THE
TRICK!

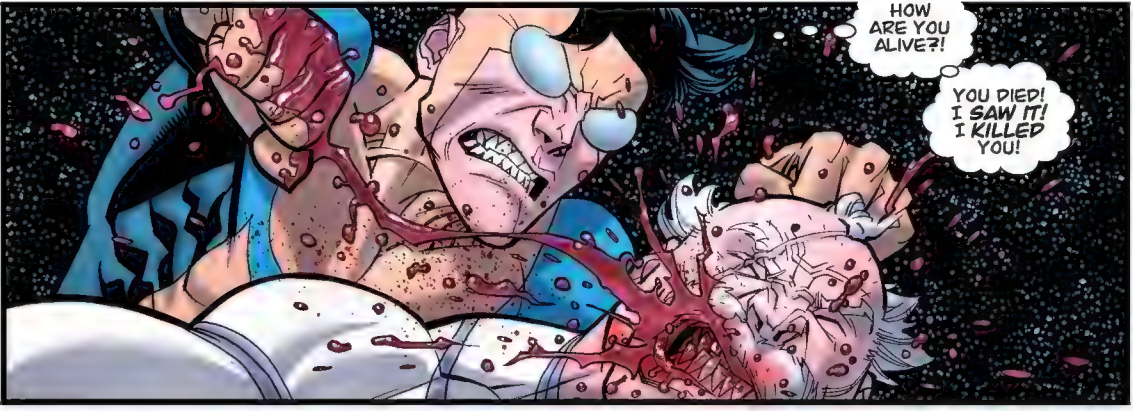


NOLAN! THE
TRAITOR! I CAN'T
BELIEVE MY
LUCK. I GET
TO KILL YOU,
TOO!

WHAT HAVE
I DONE TO
DESERVE SUCH
FORTUNE?!

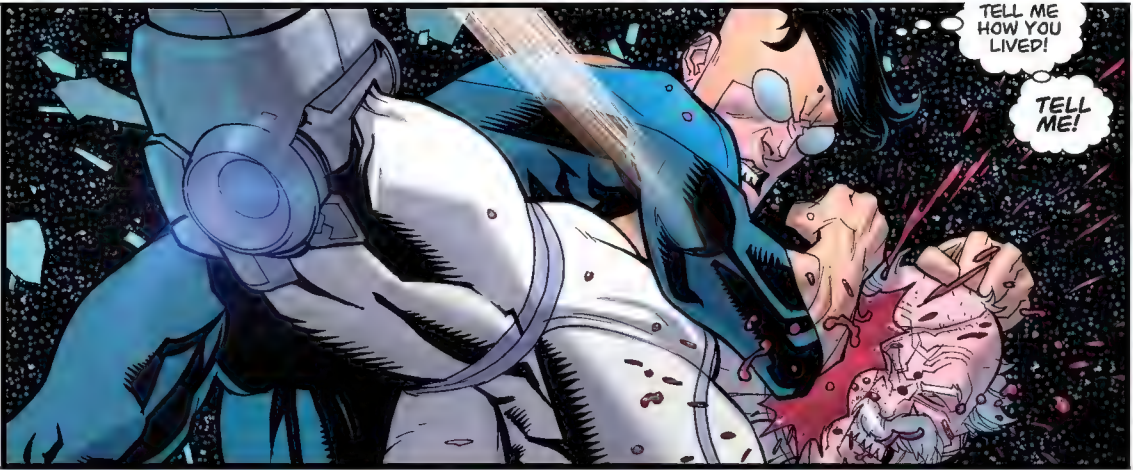
YOUR SON IS
SO POWERFUL--
ALMOST STRONGER
THAN YOU. YOU
MUST BE SO
PROUD!





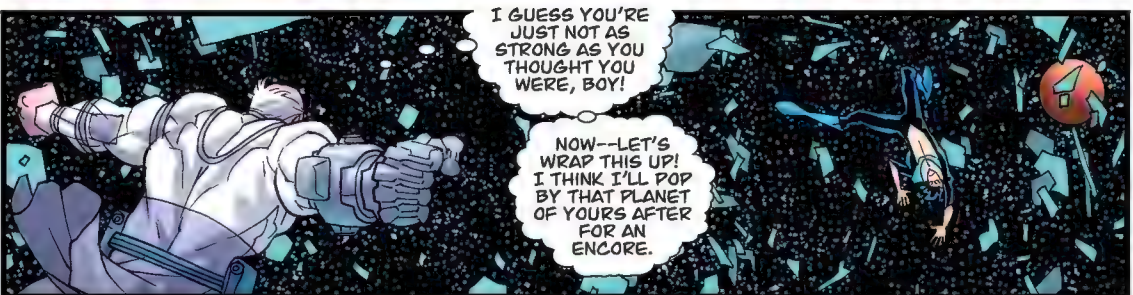
HOW ARE YOU ALIVE?!

YOU DIED! I SAW IT! I KILLED YOU!



TELL ME HOW YOU LIVED!

TELL ME!



I GUESS YOU'RE JUST NOT AS STRONG AS YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE, BOY!

NOW--LET'S WRAP THIS UP! I THINK I'LL POP BY THAT PLANET OF YOURS AFTER FOR AN ENCORE.



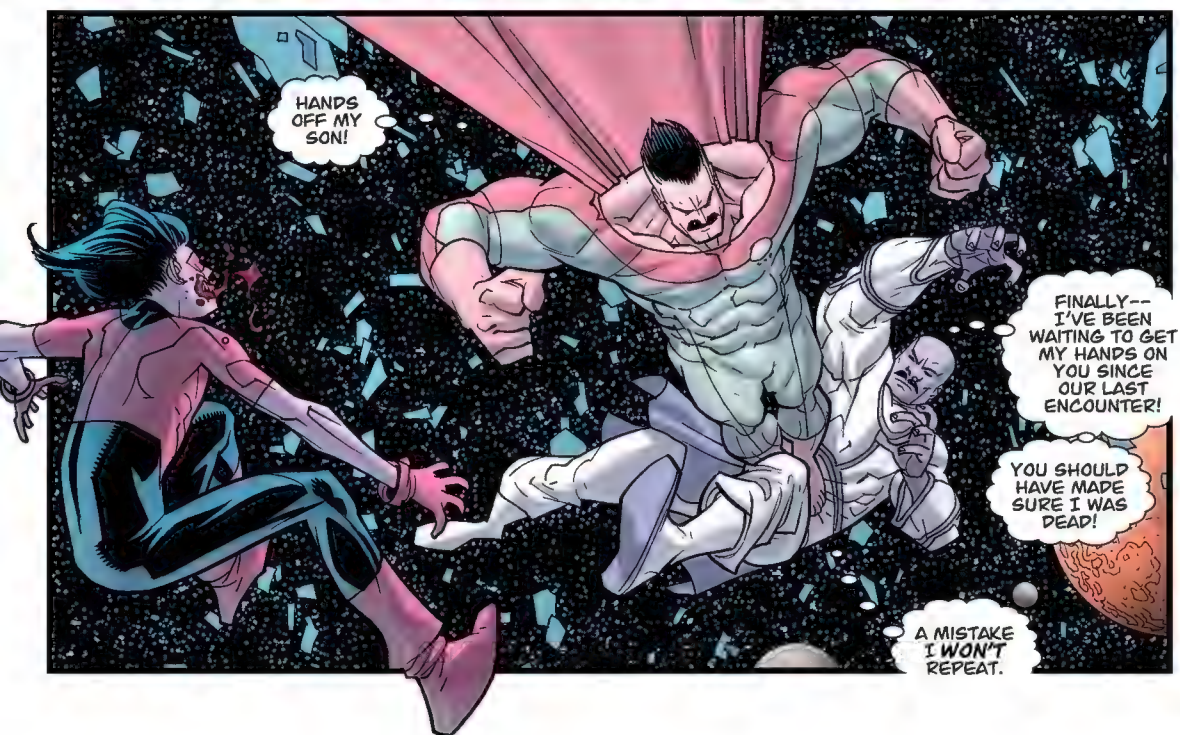
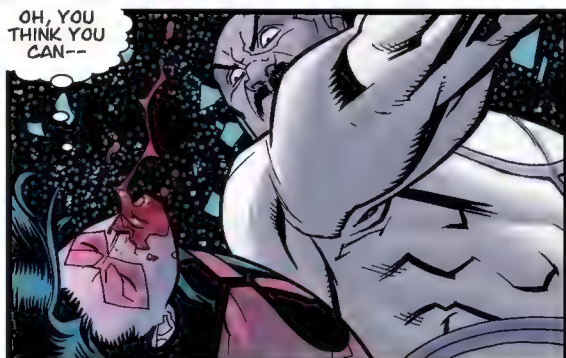
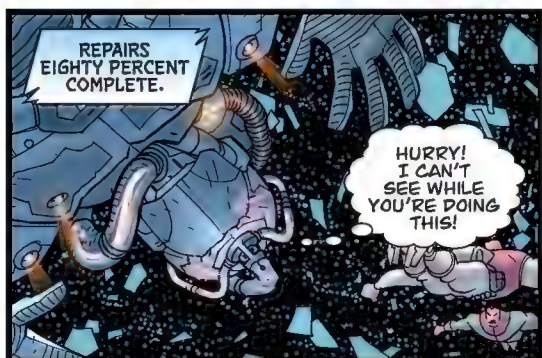
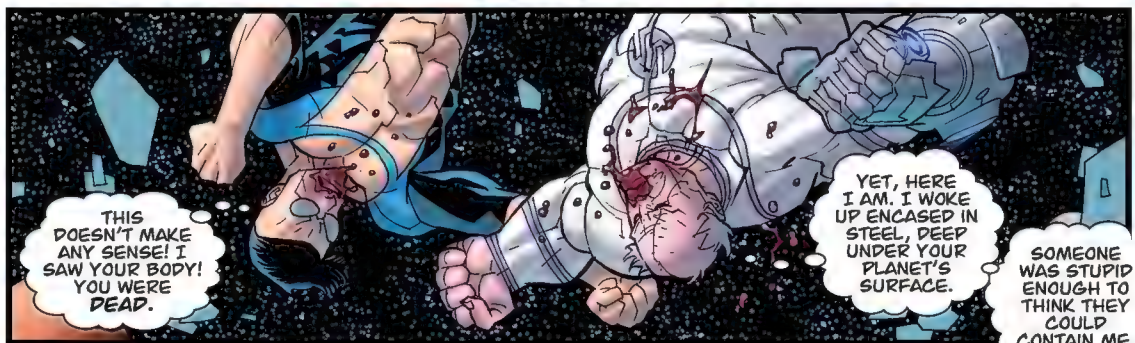
C'MON, JERKFACE. I'M NOT SCARED OF YOU--ANY OF YOU!

YOU'RE YOUNG, GIVE IT TIME.



YOU CAN'T HOPE TO STAND AGAINST OUR EMPIRE IF THESE ARE THE FINEST SOLDIERS YOU CAN FIND.

PATHETIC!





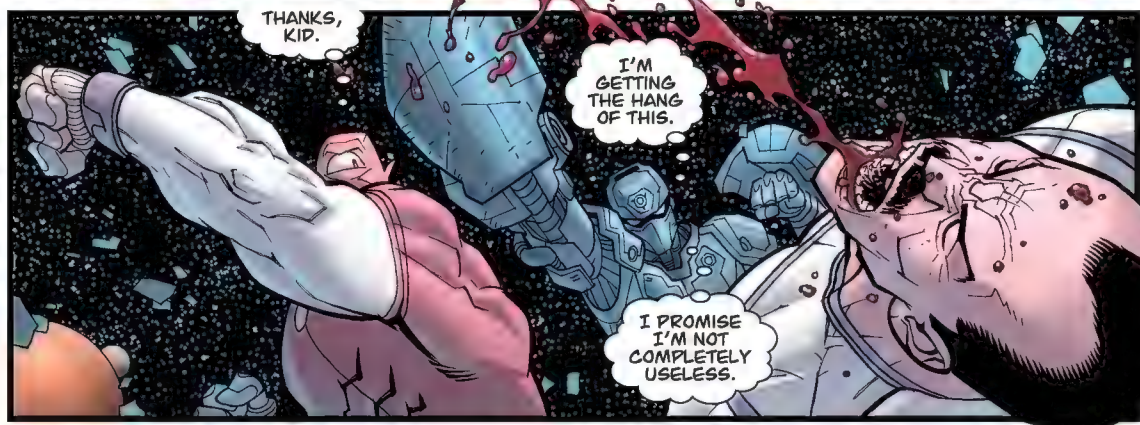
CECIL KEPT YOU ALIVE?! THAT HAS TO BE IT!

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D--WHEN I SEE HIM AGAIN....!



HOW OPTIMISTIC YOU ARE.

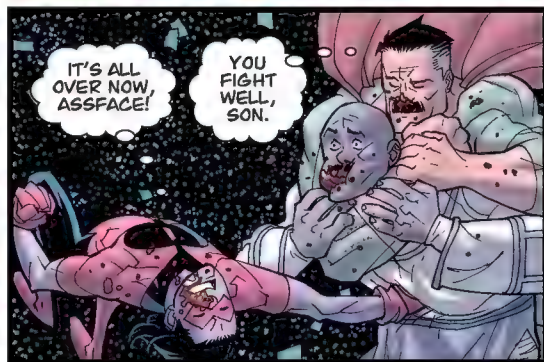
YOU WON'T BE SEEING ANYONE AGAIN!



THANKS, KID.

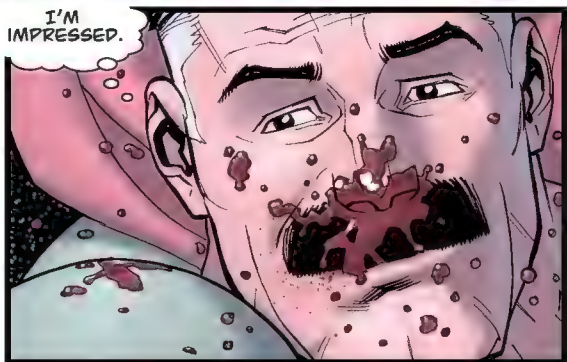
I'M GETTING THE HANG OF THIS.

I PROMISE I'M NOT COMPLETELY USELESS.



IT'S ALL OVER NOW, ASSFACE!

YOU FIGHT WELL, SON.



I'M IMPRESSED.



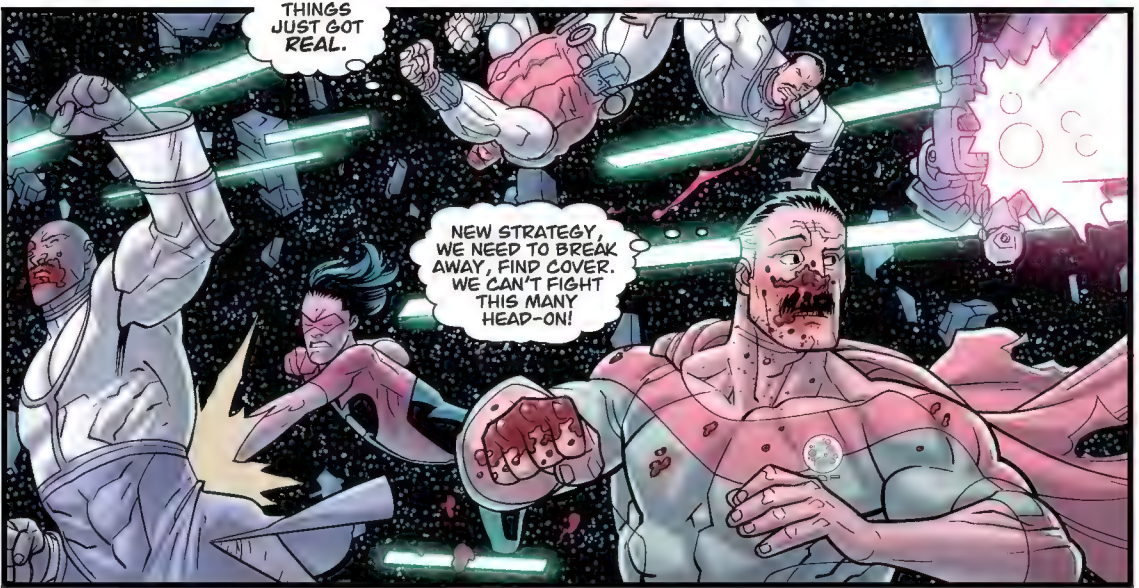
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?! I KNOW YOUR NUMBERS ARE SPARSE, BUT THREE?! YOU'RE RIDICULOUSLY OUTNUMBERED!

WHAT EVER MADE YOU THINK YOU GUYS HAD A CHANCE?



NEVER
MIND
THEN.

OH.



THINGS
JUST GOT
REAL.

NEW STRATEGY,
WE NEED TO BREAK
AWAY, FIND COVER.
WE CAN'T FIGHT
THIS MANY
HEAD-ON!



AGH--
STUPID!



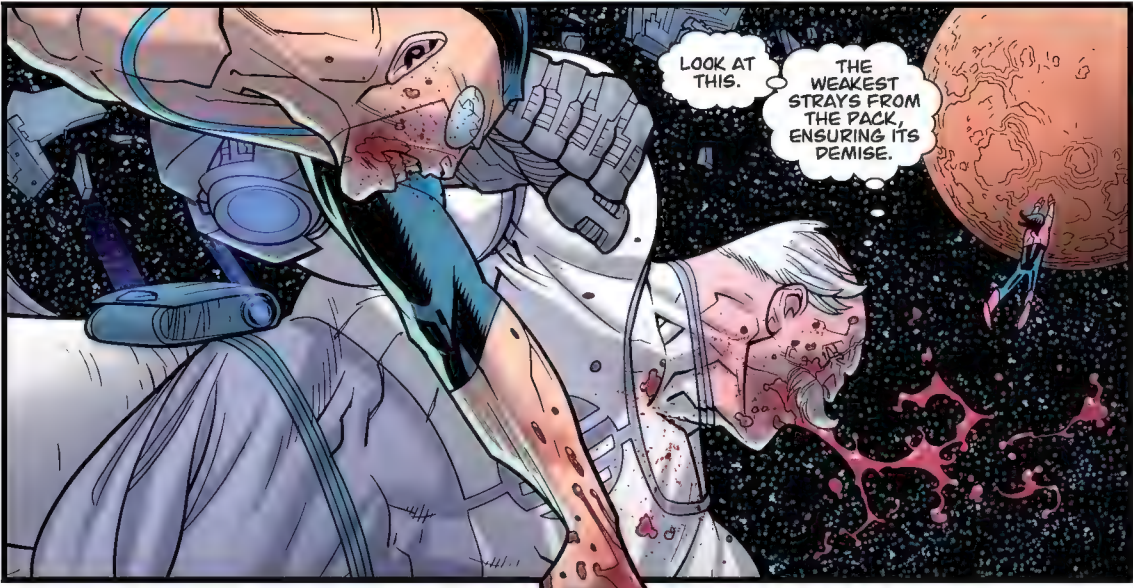
OUT OF
AIR!

CAN'T
BREATHE!



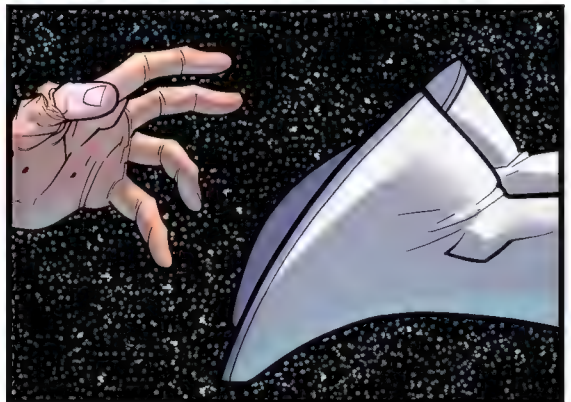
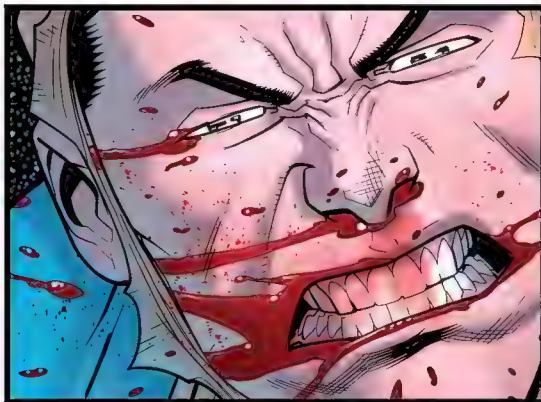
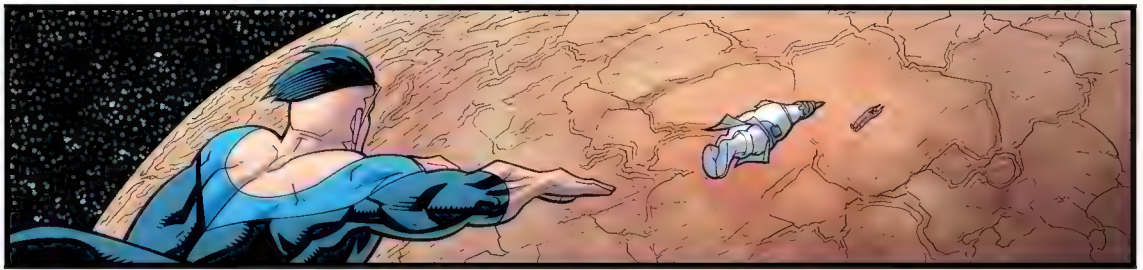
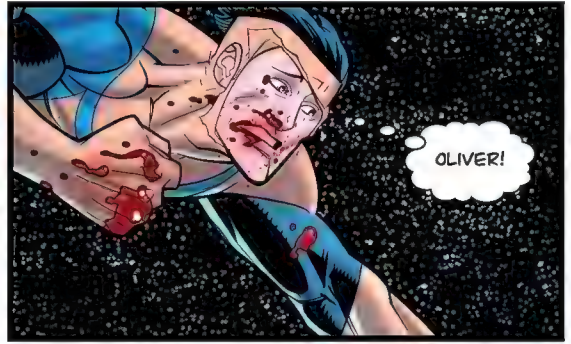
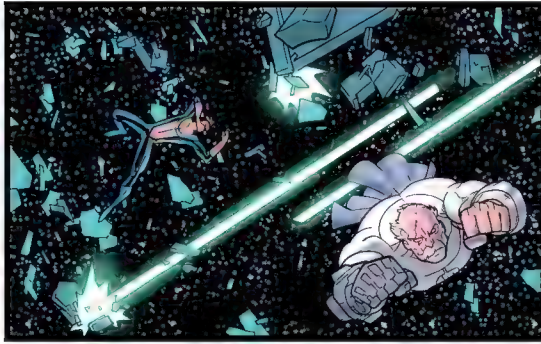
GETTING
LIGHT-
HEADED!
WHAT DO
I DO?!

THE
PLANET WE
PASSED--
GO!



LOOK AT
THIS.

THE
WEAKEST
STRAYS FROM
THE PACK,
ENSURING ITS
DEMISE.

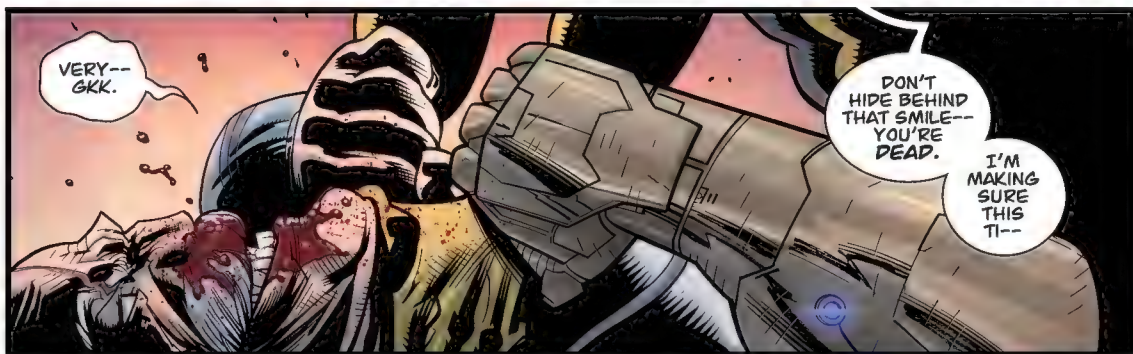






THAT KNOCKED
THE WIND OUT
OF YOU--
DIDN'T IT?

OR DID
YOU JUST
EXHALE KNOWING
THAT YOU WERE
COMING TO THIS
PLANET--AND
COULD GET A
BREATH?



VERY--
GKK.

DON'T
HIDE BEHIND
THAT SMILE--
YOU'RE
DEAD.

I'M
MAKING
SURE
THIS
TI--



KROOOM!



WROKK!

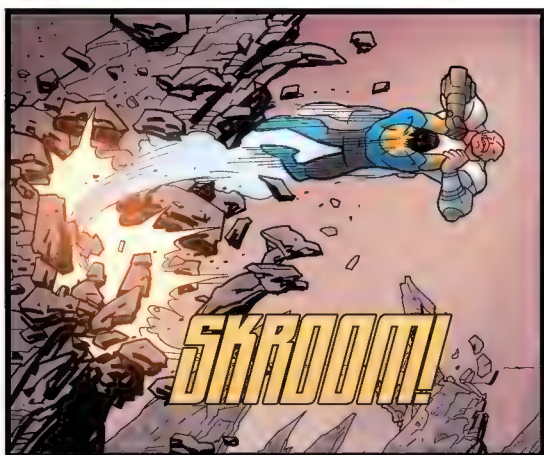
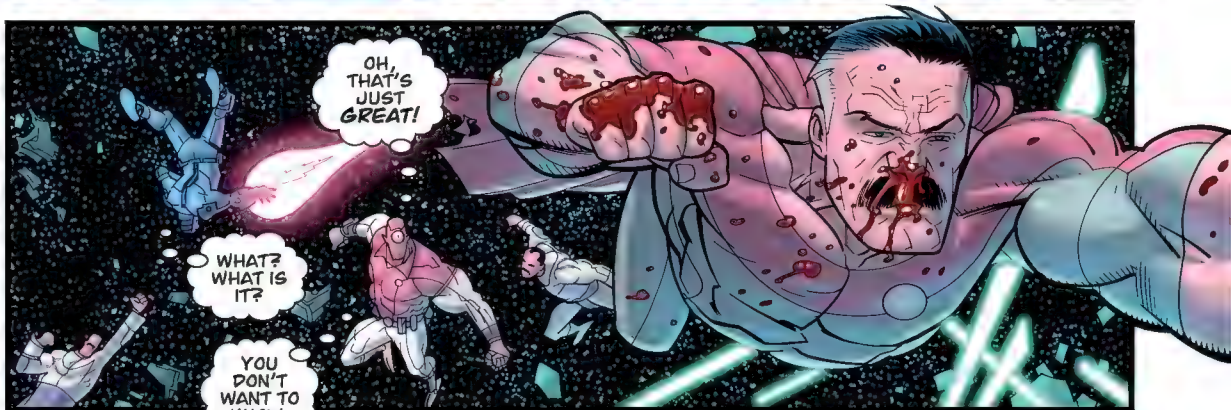
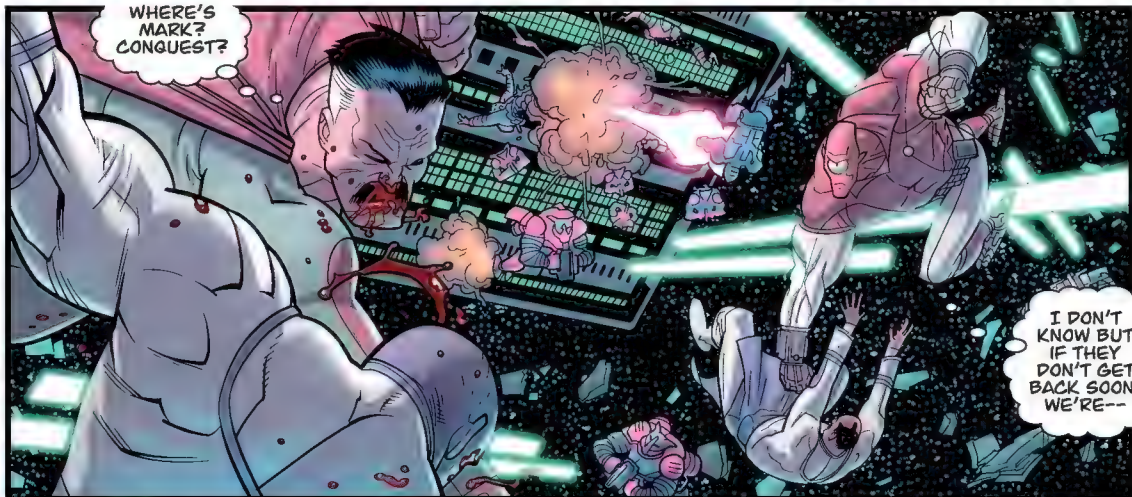
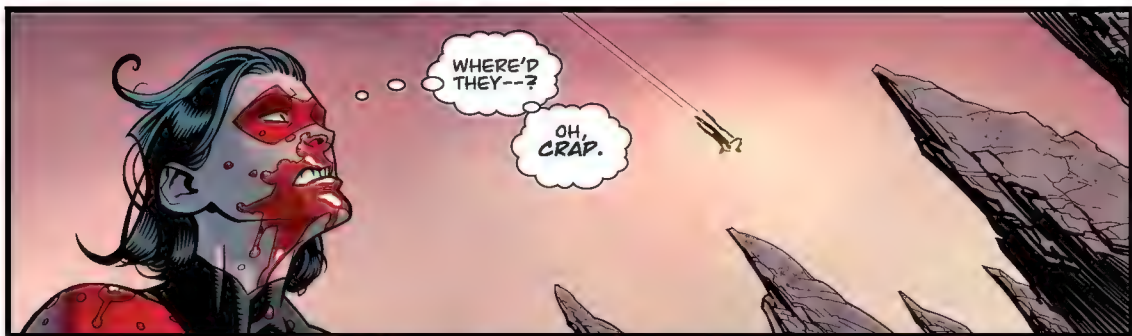


WHAT'S THIS
SUPPOSED TO
DO? I GOT A
BREATH.

YOU
REALLY
THINK I
CAN'T MAKE
YOU LET
GO?

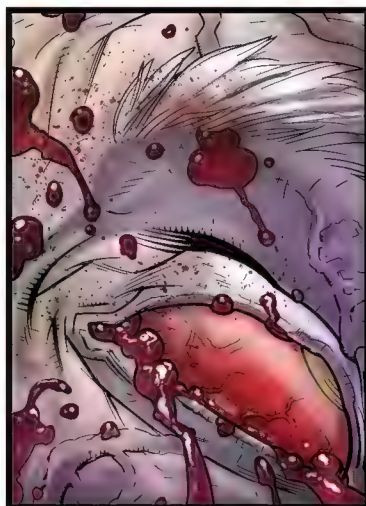
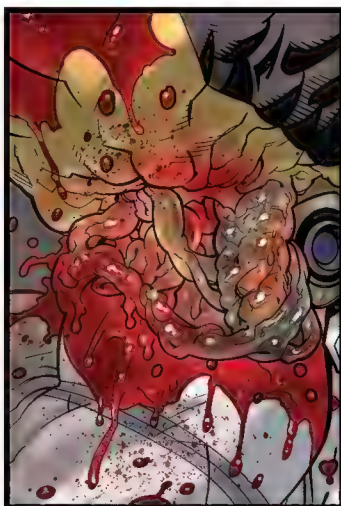
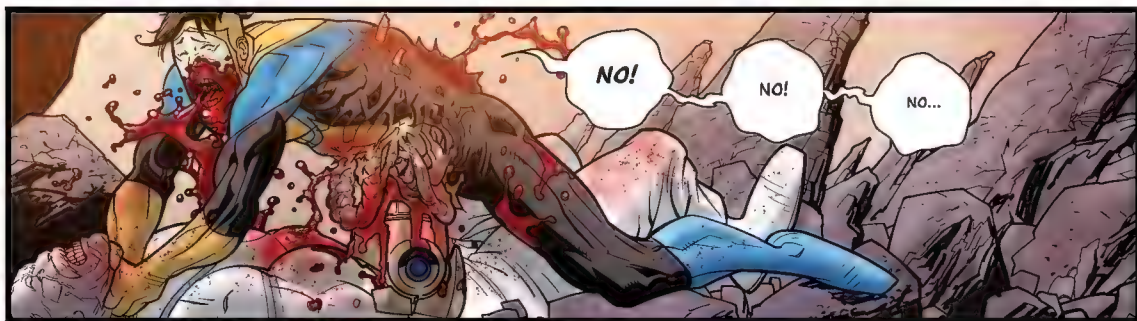
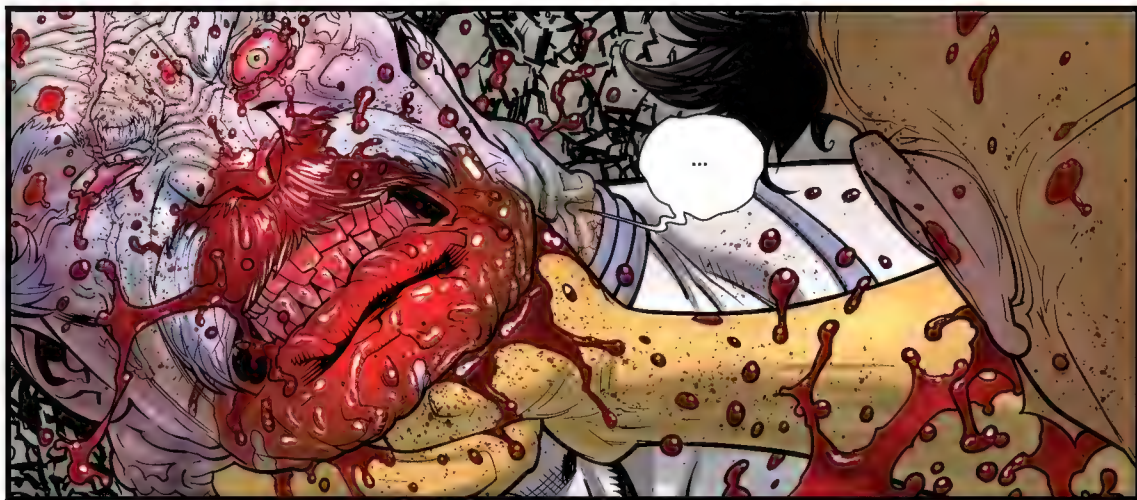


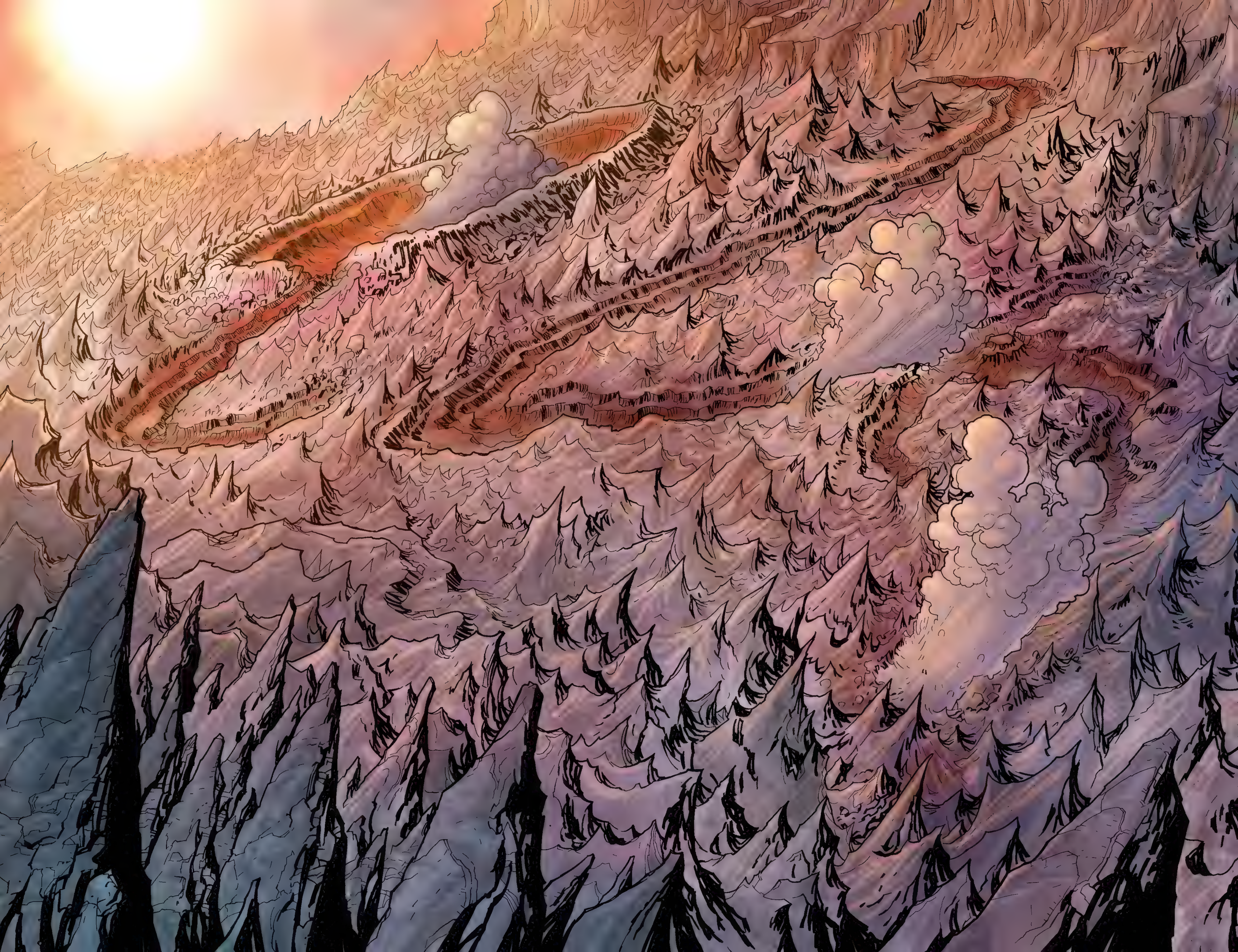
LOOKS LIKE
I'M CHANGING
THE DEATH
ORDER. YOU'RE
NUMBER ONE, KID.











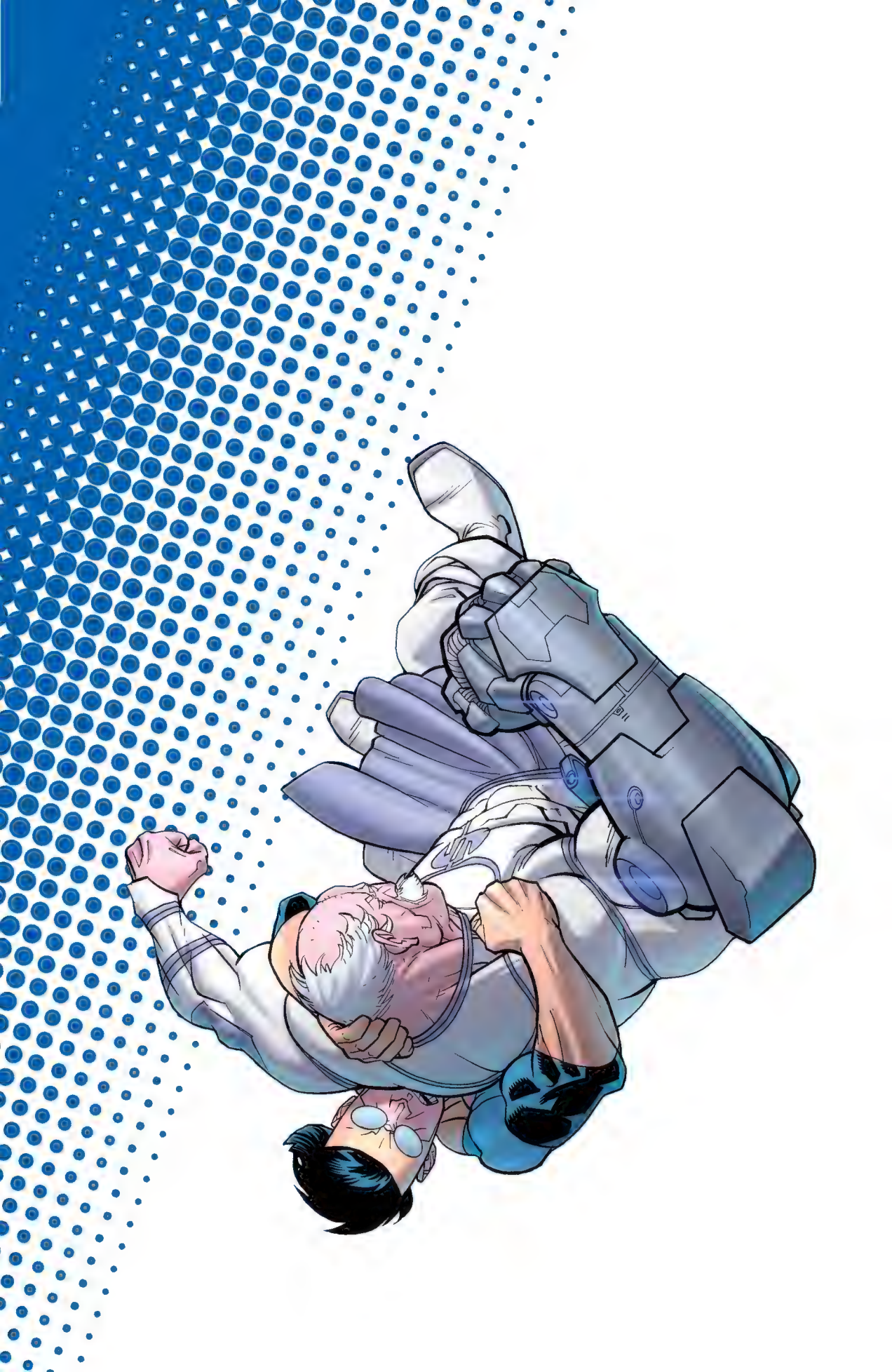


SHUFFLE

SHUFFLE

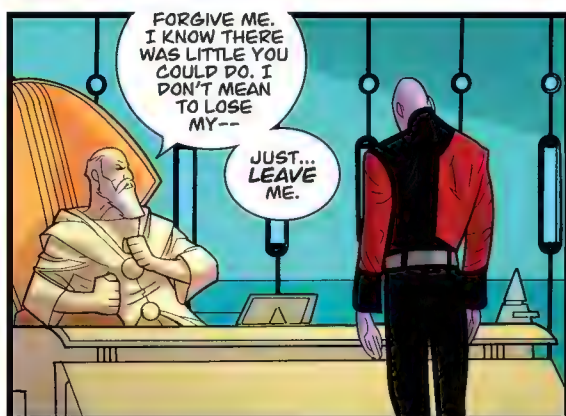
SHUFFLE

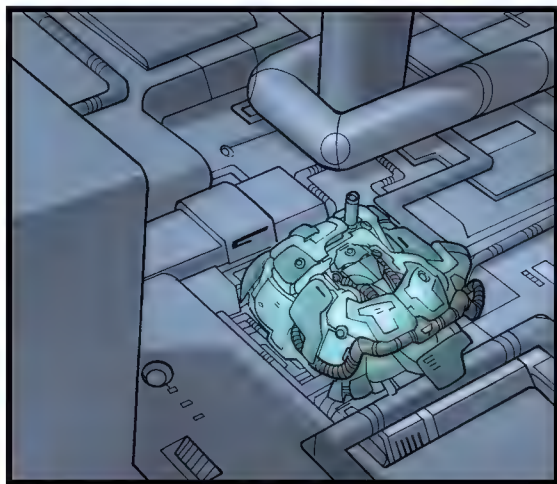
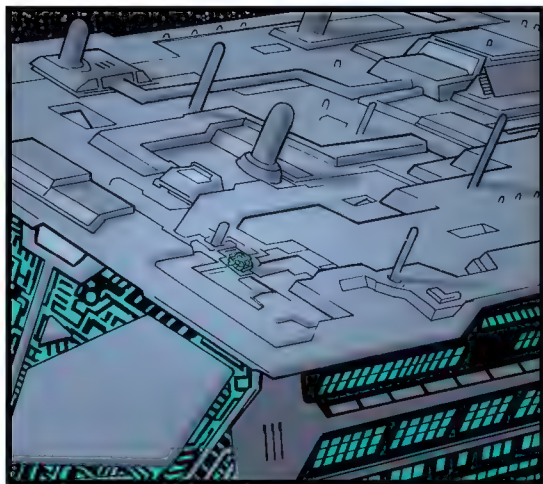
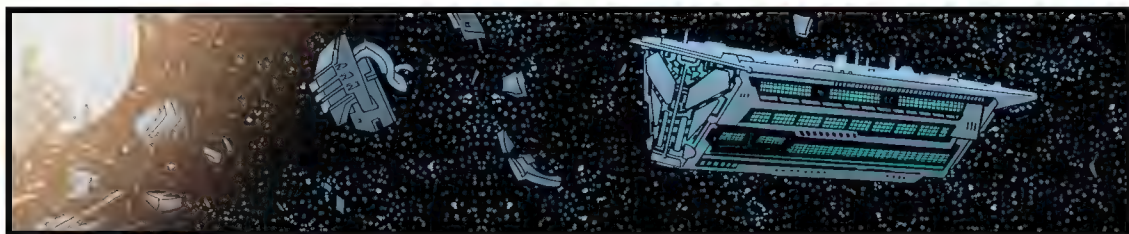
HELP.

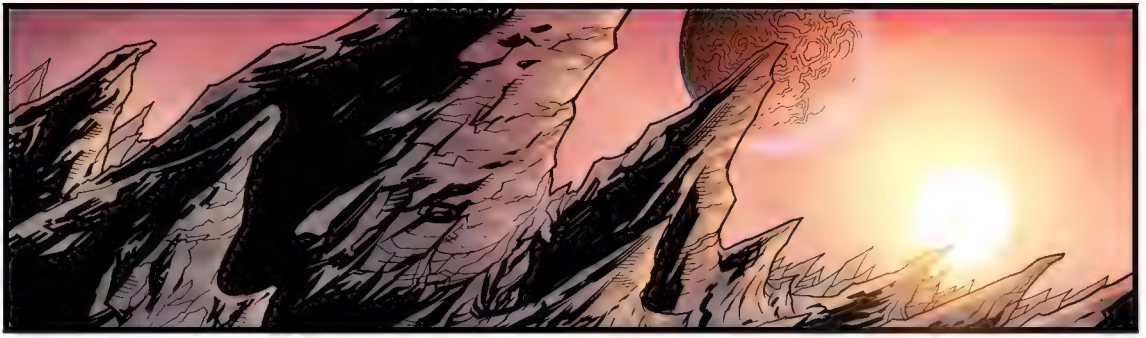


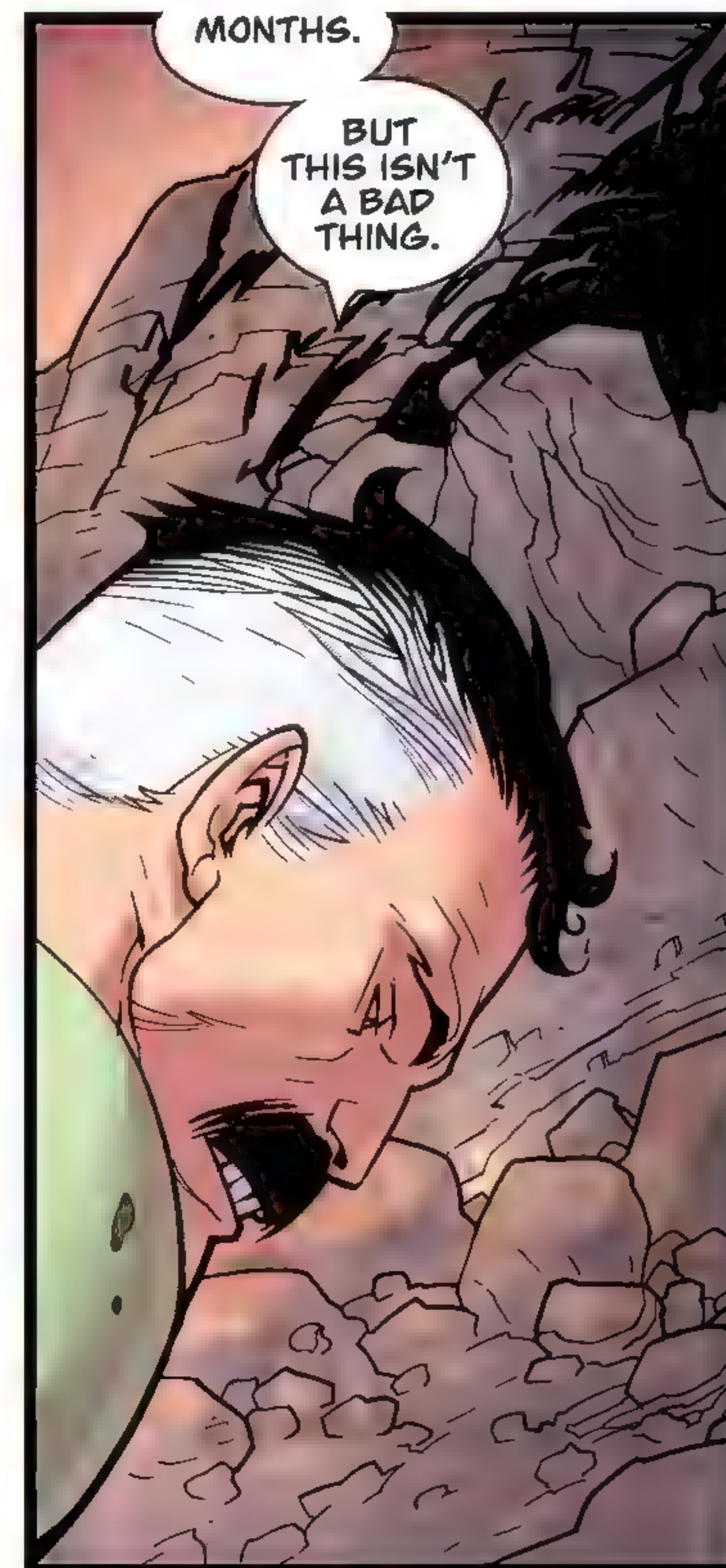
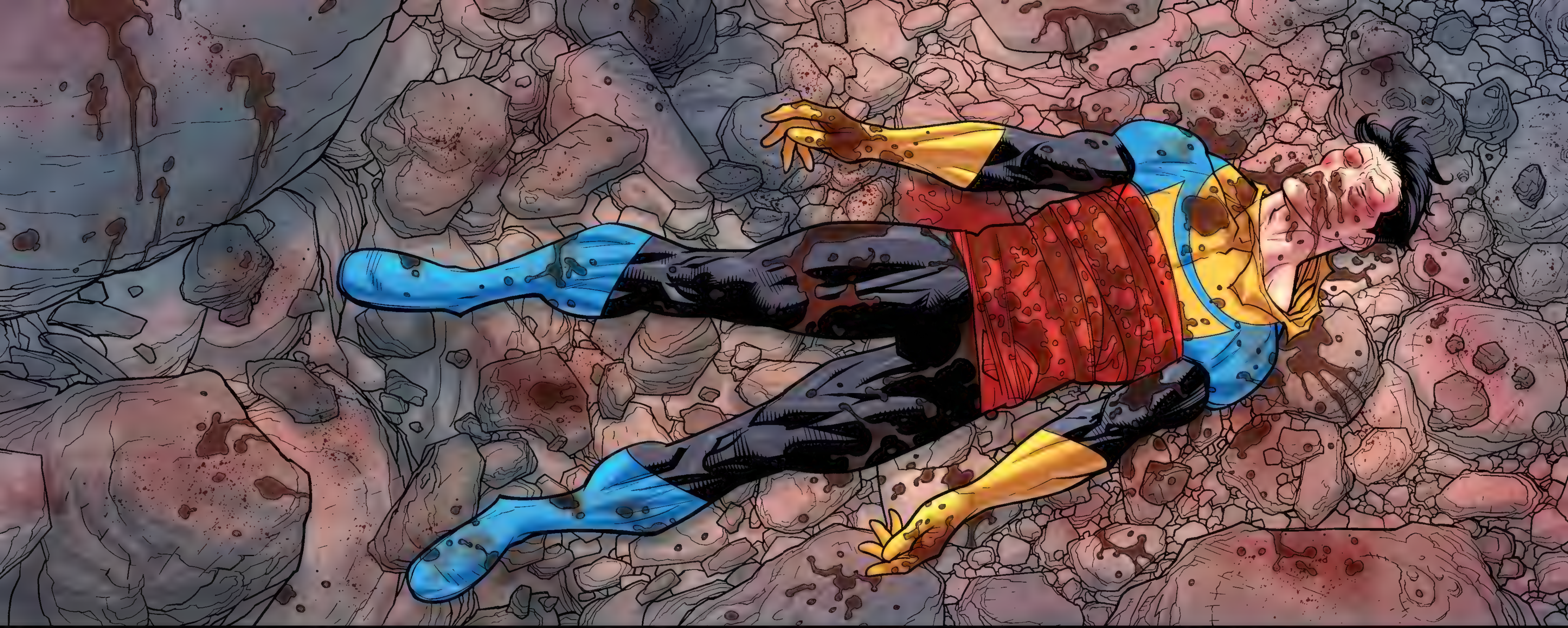
CHAPTER 73

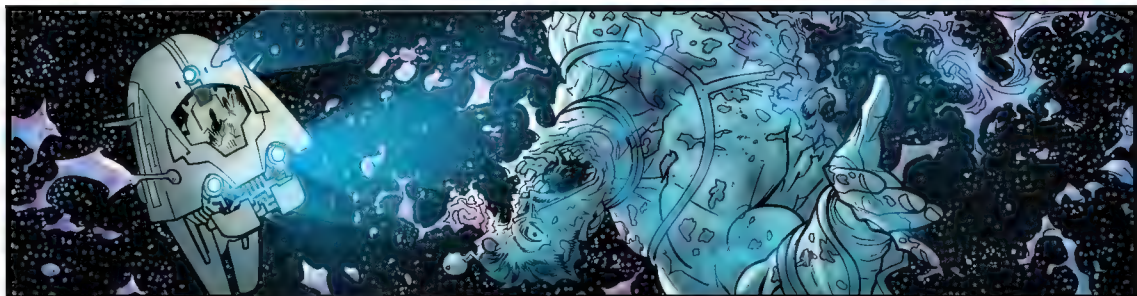
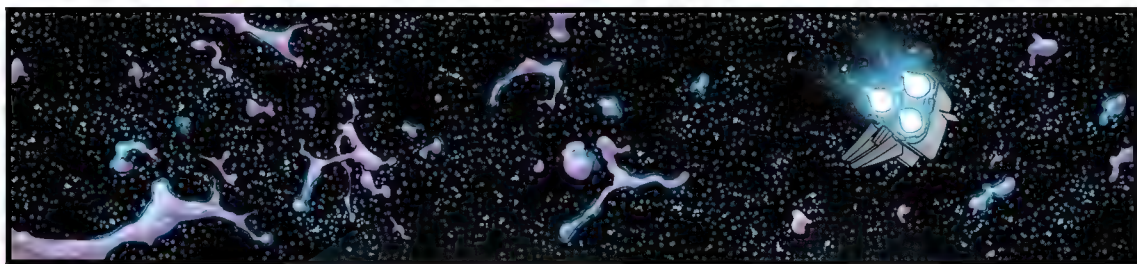








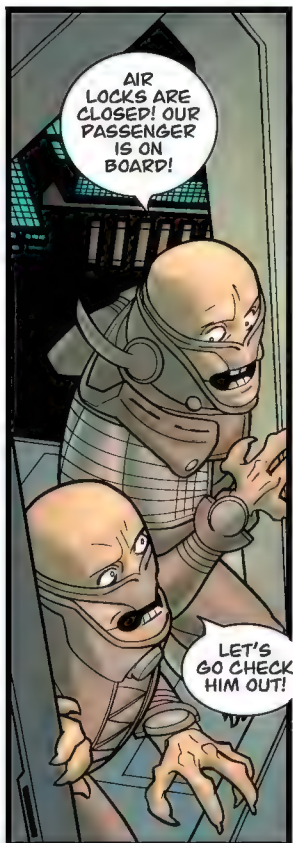
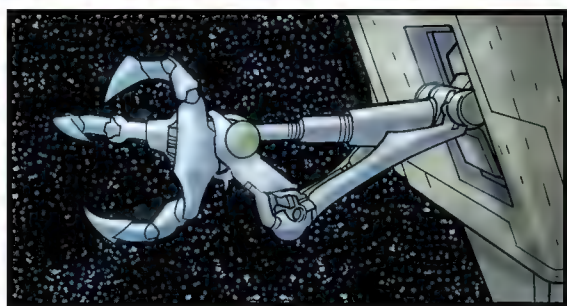




WHOA, ARE YOU SEEING THIS?! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?!

I'M READING LIFE SIGNS! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THIS THING!

I'M ACTIVATING THE CLAW-- WE'VE GOT TO REPORT THIS TO THE COALITION!



AIR LOCKS ARE CLOSED! OUR PASSENGER IS ON BOARD!

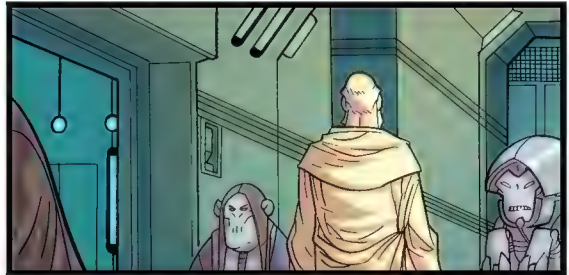
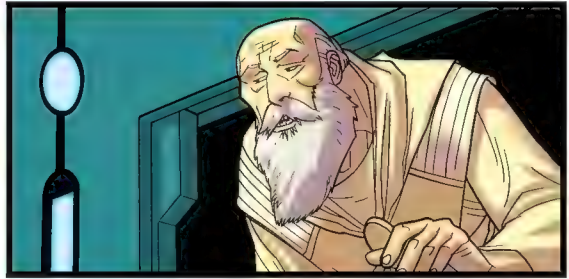
LET'S GO CHECK HIM OUT!



WHOA!

M-M-M--
--MORE.

HE'S HUGE!

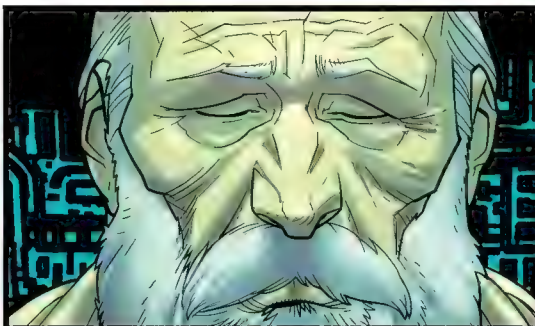


WE'VE BEEN BUSY WHILE NOLAN AND ALLEN WERE ON THEIR MISSION TO EARTH. THE KLAXUS EXTRACT WE HARVESTED FROM THE SINLAK BEETLES HAS BEEN PROVEN EFFECTIVE AGAINST VILTRUMITE TISSUE, AND ALL COALITION TROOPS ARE BEING ARMED WITH KLAXUS EXTRACT-LACED ARMAMENTS.

WE STARTED ON THE DRIDELL OUTPOST, WHICH THE COUNCIL AGREED WOULD BE THE BEST STAGING GROUND FOR A FIRST STRIKE AGAINST VILTRUMITE HELD CIVILIZATIONS.

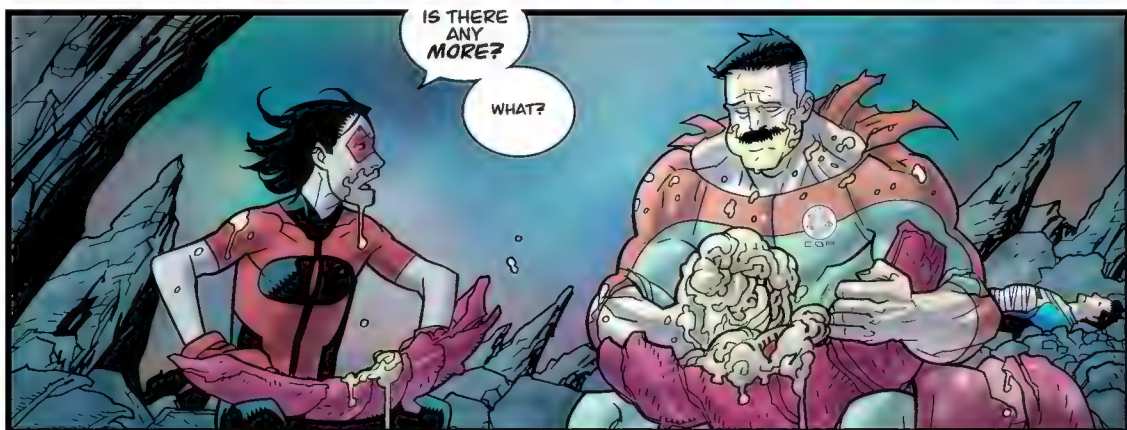
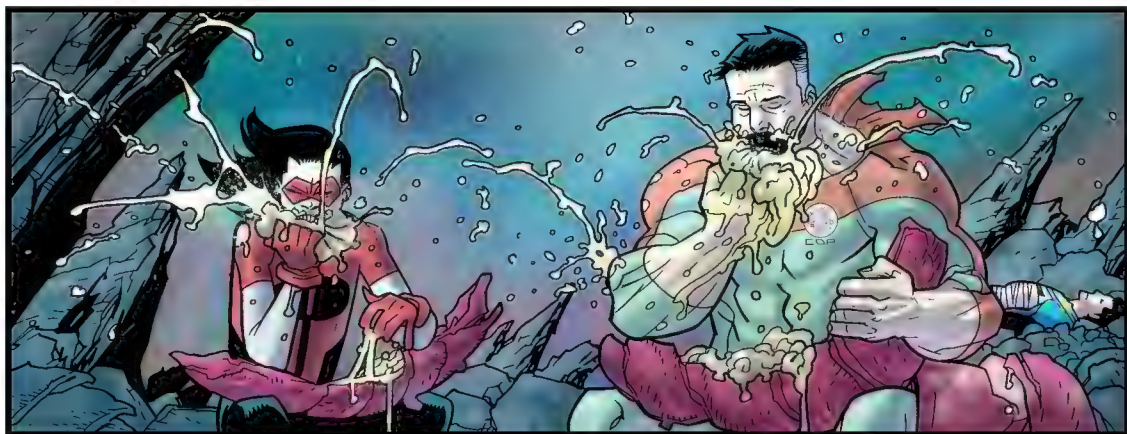
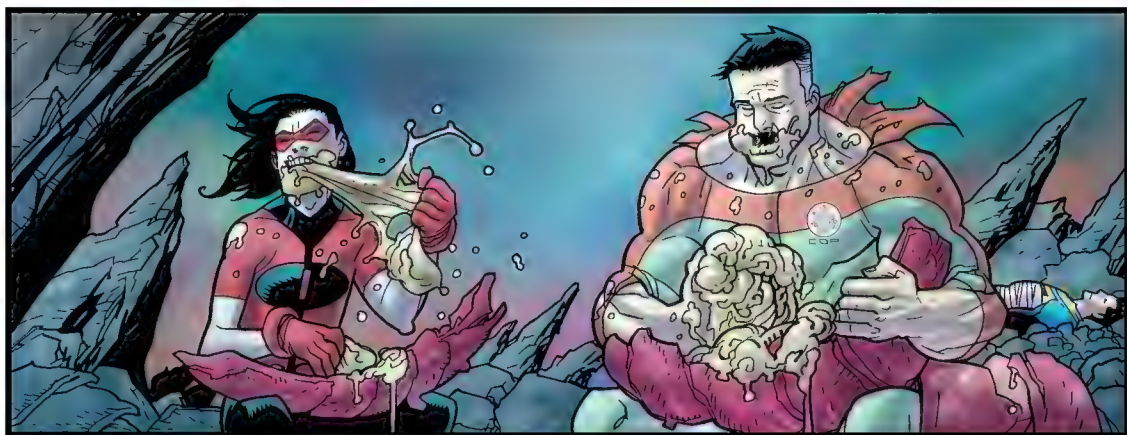
THE ATTACK ON CAPTAIN PIKELL'S SHIP WHILE RETURNING FROM EARTH IS SERVING AS THE FIRST STRIKE BY THE VILTRUMITES. IT DEMANDS A RESPONSE...

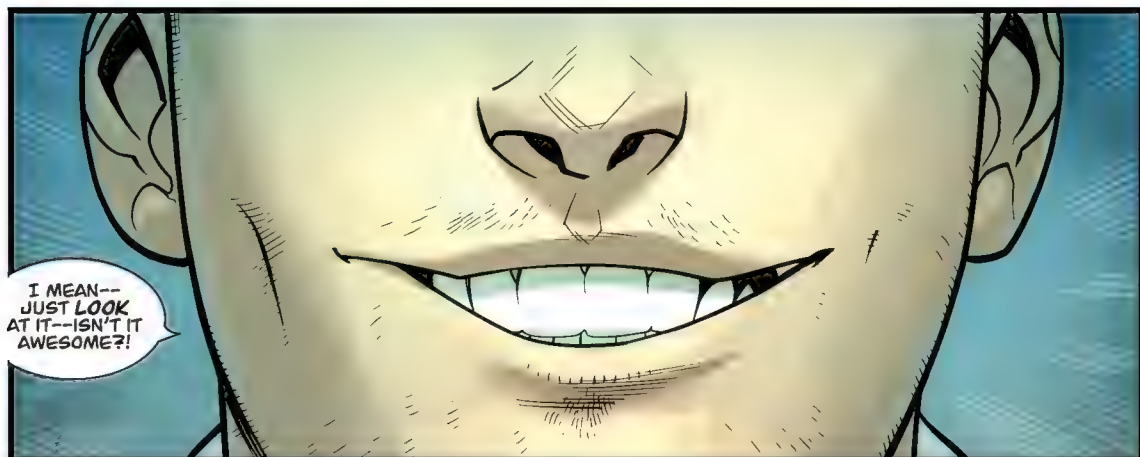
WE REQUIRE THE FINAL WORD FROM YOU, FOR THIS WAR TO BEGIN.









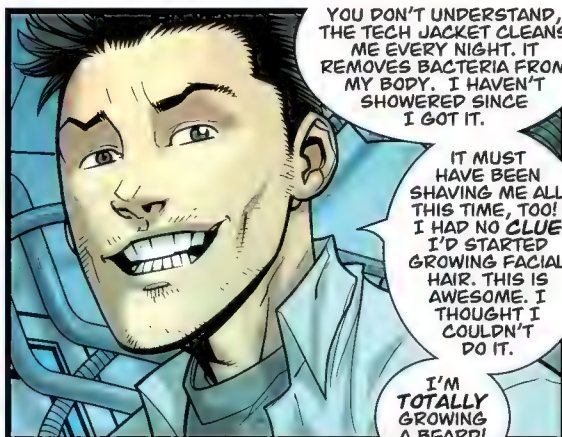


I MEAN--
JUST LOOK
AT IT--ISN'T IT
AWESOME?!



I CAN SEE IT, IT'S
GREAT... REALLY.
DO YOU HAVE TO
KEEP BRINGING IT
UP? IT'S JUST
FACIAL HAIR.

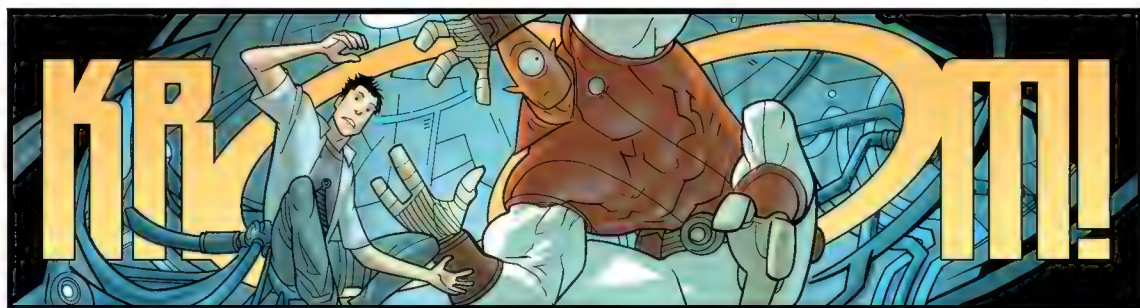
THIS IS
WORSE THAN
WHEN YOU WERE
EXPLAINING
WHERE YOUR
EXCREMENT
WENT...



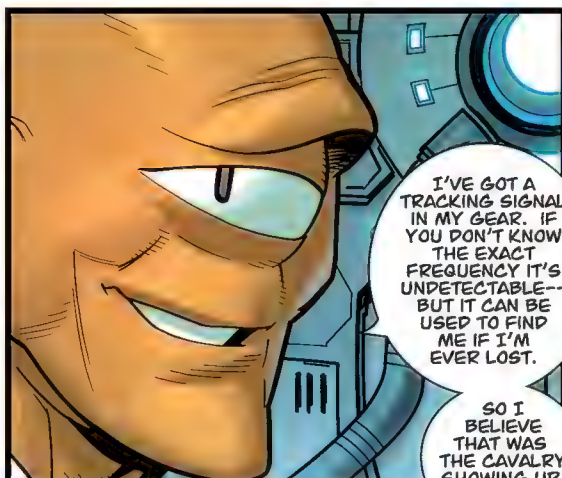
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
THE TECH JACKET CLEANS
ME EVERY NIGHT. IT
REMOVES BACTERIA FROM
MY BODY. I HAVEN'T
SHOWERED SINCE
I GOT IT.

IT MUST
HAVE BEEN
SHAVING ME ALL
THIS TIME, TOO!
I HAD NO CLUE
I'D STARTED
GROWING FACIAL
HAIR. THIS IS
AWESOME. I
THOUGHT I
COULDN'T
DO IT.

I'M
TOTALLY
GROWING
A BEARD!



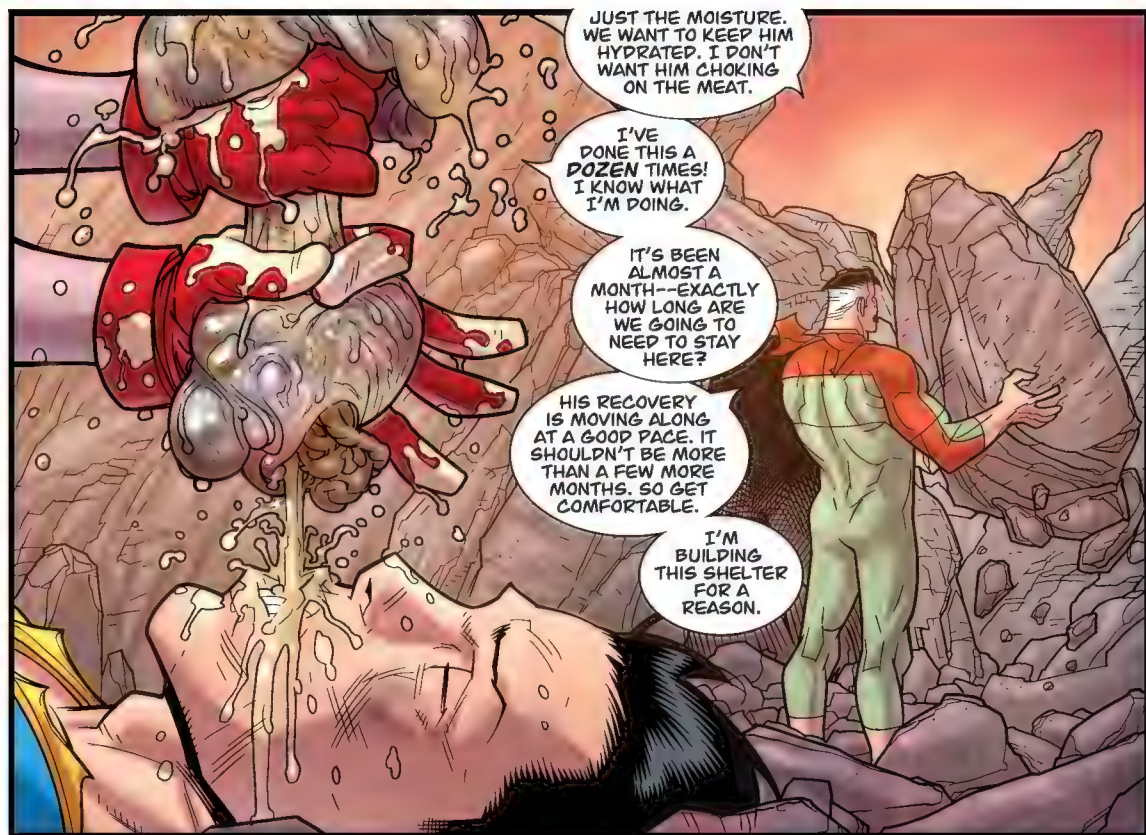
WHAT
THE HECK
WAS
THAT?!



I'VE GOT A
TRACKING SIGNAL
IN MY GEAR. IF
YOU DON'T KNOW
THE EXACT
FREQUENCY IT'S
UNDETECTABLE--
BUT IT CAN BE
USED TO FIND
ME IF I'M
EVER LOST.

SO I
BELIEVE
THAT WAS
THE CAVALRY
SHOWING UP.





JUST THE MOISTURE. WE WANT TO KEEP HIM HYDRATED. I DON'T WANT HIM CHOKING ON THE MEAT.

I'VE DONE THIS A DOZEN TIMES! I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.

IT'S BEEN ALMOST A MONTH--EXACTLY HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO NEED TO STAY HERE?

HIS RECOVERY IS MOVING ALONG AT A GOOD PACE. IT SHOULDN'T BE MORE THAN A FEW MORE MONTHS. SO GET COMFORTABLE.

I'M BUILDING THIS SHELTER FOR A REASON.



MY MOM, NOT MY REAL MOM, MY EARTH MOM, MARK'S MOM, UH--DEBBIE.

YOU REALLY THINK YOU LOVE HER?



I KNOW I DO.

IT TOOK ME MONTHS OF HEALING IN A VILTRUMITE PRISON TO MAKE ME REALIZE IT... BUT YES, I DO.



WE HAVE AFFECTION, THE VILTRUMITES, BUT WE DON'T CARE FOR EACH OTHER LIKE HUMANS DO. OUR LIVES ARE SO LONG THAT OVER TIME WE GROW DISTANT, IT'S HARD TO FORM A BOND WITH SOMEONE OVER THAT MUCH TIME.

YOU'LL NEVER FIND ONE OF US WHO WILL ADMIT IT-- BUT WE LIVE VERY LONELY, SOLITARY LIVES. ESPECIALLY WITH OUR NUMBERS SO DEPLETED.

LIVING ON EARTH CHANGED ME. SEEING HUMANS GROW SO CLOSE TO EACH OTHER, CARING SO DEEPLY FOR THEIR LOVED ONES IN THE SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME ALLOTTED FOR THEM... IT WAS SPECIAL, SOMETHING TO BE ADMIRRED.



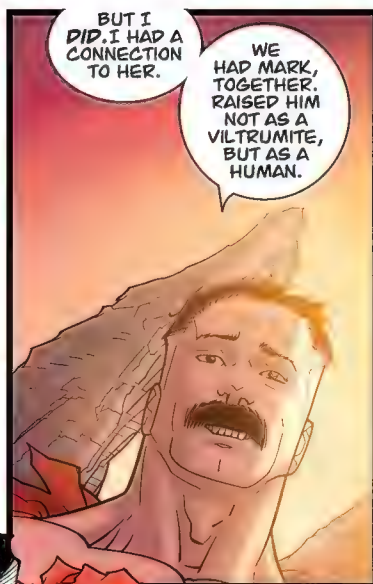
AT FIRST I WAS A SPECTATOR, WATCHING AS THEY LIVED THEIR LIVES. ACTING AS ONE OF THEM, GROWING CLOSE TO DEBBIE, PRETENDING TO FORM A BOND.

BUT WHY HER? DID I JUST PICK HER AT RANDOM?



AT FIRST I THOUGHT I HAD, I TOLD MYSELF THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY.

I COULDN'T ACTUALLY CARE FOR THIS FRAIL CREATURE.



BUT I DID. I HAD A CONNECTION TO HER.

WE HAD MARK, TOGETHER. RAISED HIM NOT AS A VILTRUMITE, BUT AS A HUMAN.



I THOUGHT I WAS BIDDING MY TIME, WAITING TO SEE IF MARK DEVELOPED POWERS... WAITING TO SEE HOW HUMAN DNA MIXED WITH VILTRUMITE DNA... IF HE'D HAVE POWERS AND IF SO, HOW CLOSE TO VILTRUMITE STRENGTH HE WAS.

BUT I NEVER LOOKED AT THAT LIFE AS A CHORE. I ENJOYED IT.

OVER TIME, I FELL INTO THE ROLE OF HUMAN HUSBAND, HUMAN FATHER... SO MUCH SO THAT WHEN MARK GOT HIS POWERS...

...IT WAS A GREAT BURDEN MORE THAN ANYTHING.



I HAD TO GO BACK TO BEING A VILTRUMITE. I HAD TO DO WHAT I WAS PUT THERE TO DO.

WHETHER I WANTED TO OR NOT.



I SPENT A LOT OF TIME ALONE, THEN... CONSIDERING IF I COULD IGNORE MY DUTY, CONTINUE LIVING THE LIE I'D ENJOYED SO MUCH... WITH THE WOMAN I'D GROWN TO LOVE.

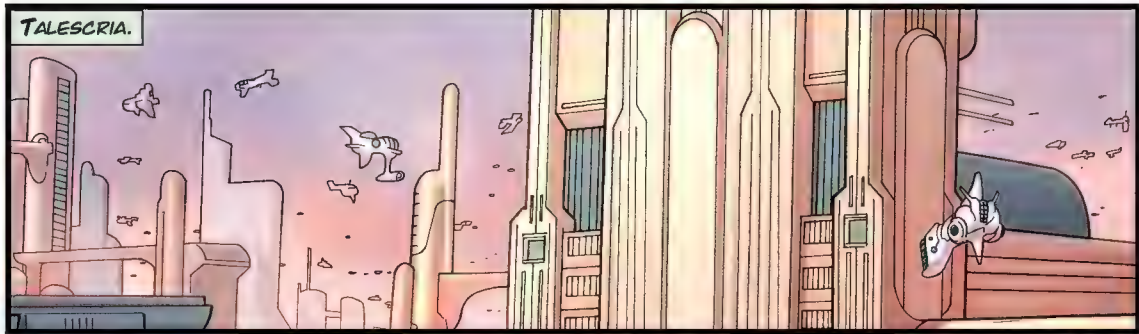
IN THE END... I CHOSE TO CARRY OUT MY MISSION... DESPITE HOW CONFLICTED I WAS.



THE DAMAGE I'VE DONE... THE PAIN I'VE CAUSED...

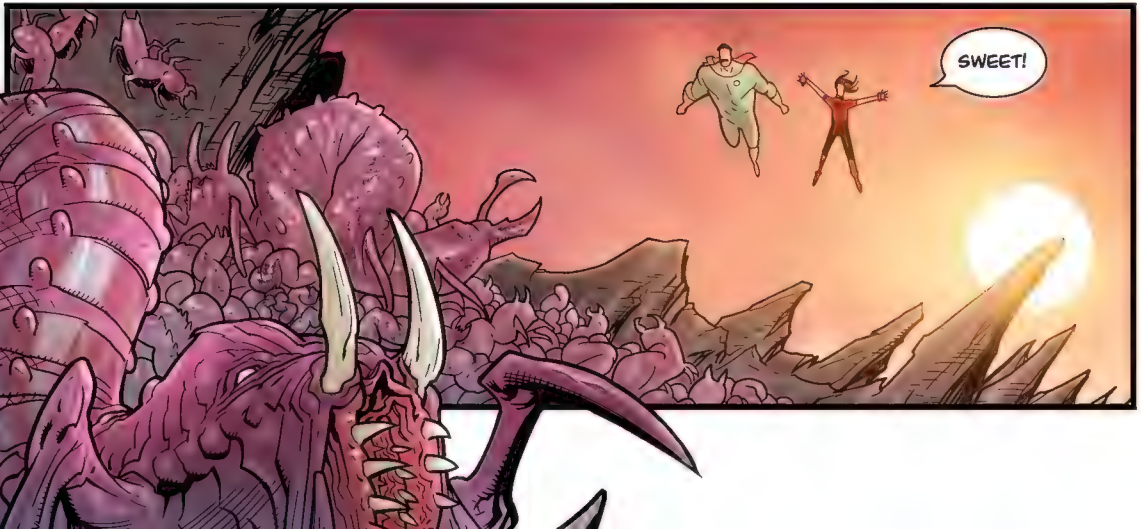
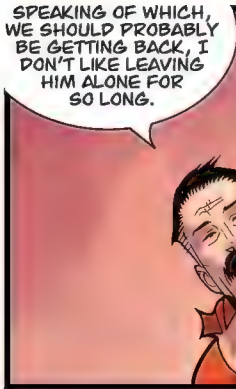
WHEN I LOOKED DOWN AT MARK, SAW HIM... BEATEN BY MY OWN HAND... A VILTRUMITE WOULD HAVE FELT NOTHING... BUT I WAS DEVASTATED.

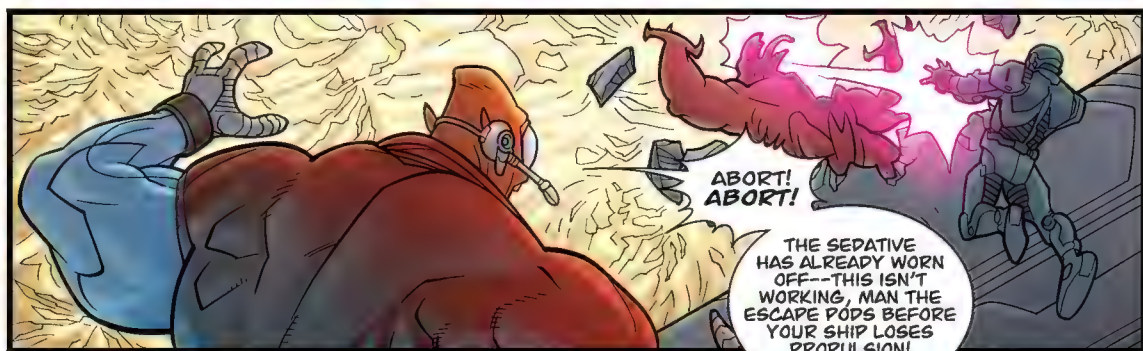
I KNEW THEN THAT I'D MADE A MISTAKE... BUT I'D ALREADY GONE TOO FAR... IT WAS TOO LATE.

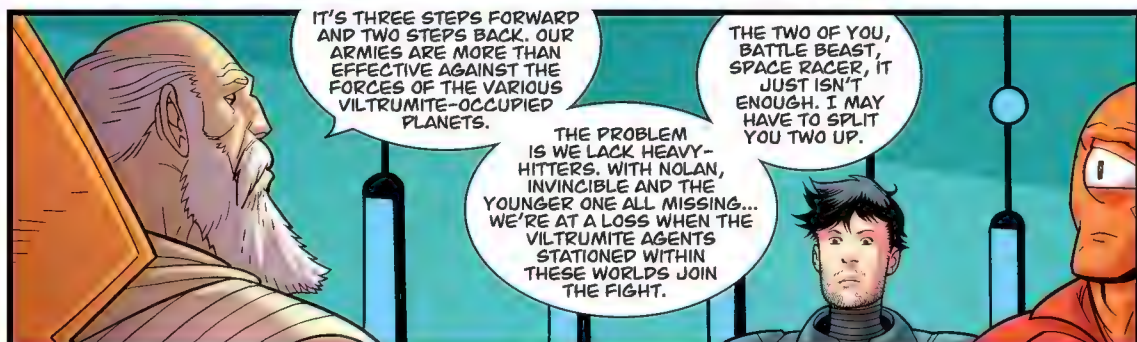
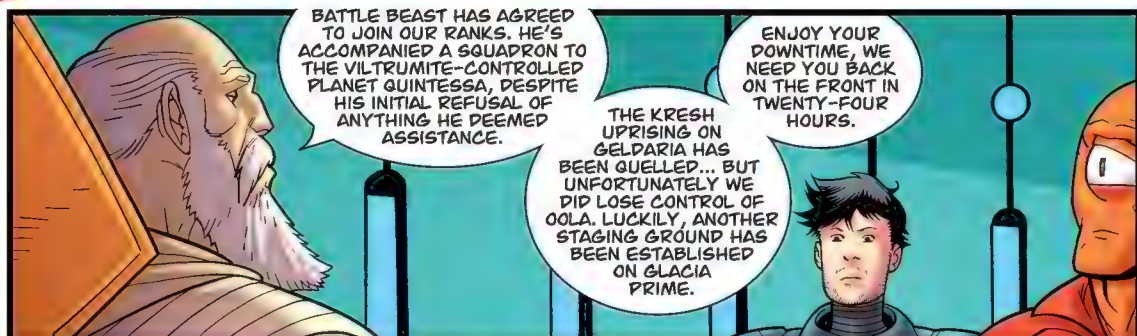
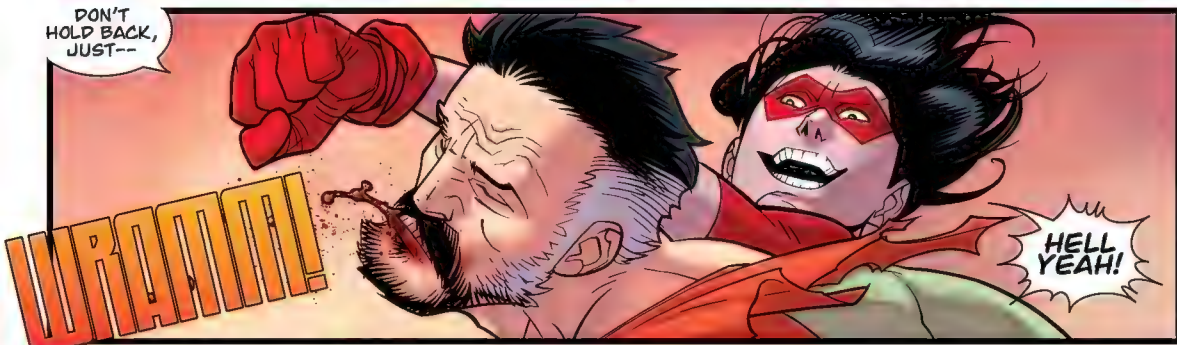
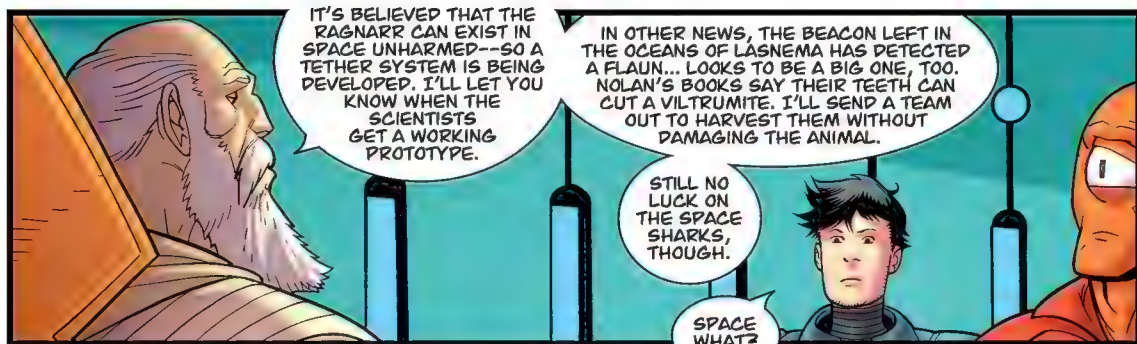


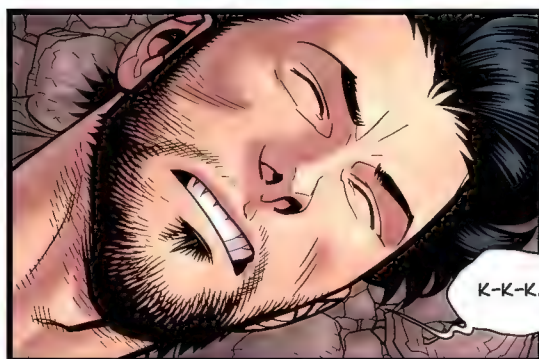
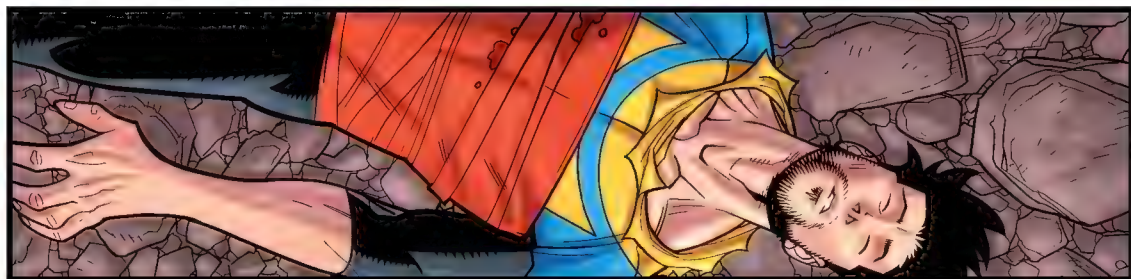
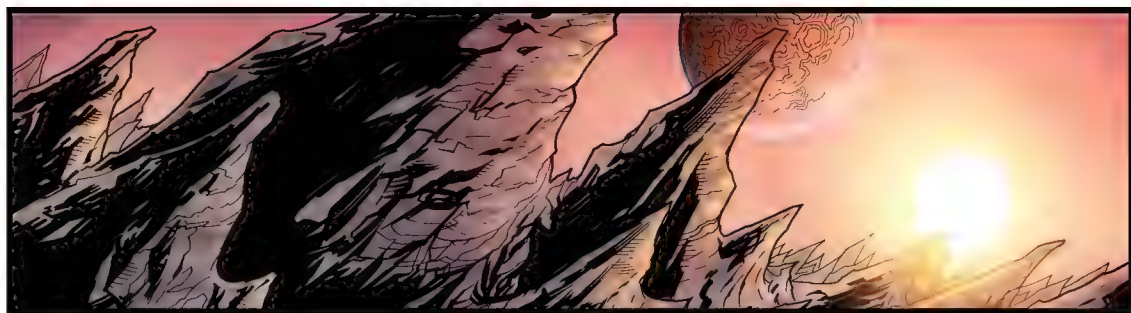


THAT'S ONLY NATURAL. I CAN'T SAY I'VE NEVER FOUND MYSELF SADDENED BY HER PASSING.

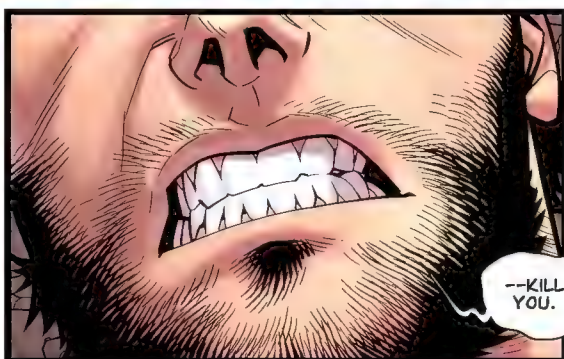








K-K-K.



--KILL YOU.



HE SPOKE...

GOOD.

WON'T BE LONG NOW.



THE FIGHTING ON DRAKUS MINOR HAS HALTED FOR THE MOMENT. COMMUNICATION COMING IN FROM GELDARIA INDICATES THINGS ARE QUIET IN THAT QUADRANT.

HELLO?

HOW ARE THINGS ON YOUR END?

BATTLE BEAST IS REFUSING A LEAVE PERIOD FOLLOWING HIS VICTORY OVER THE VILTRUMITES ON QUINTESSA. THAT ONE IS VERY DEDICATED.

YOU'VE BEEN FEEDING US INFORMATION FOR YEARS-- BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH. WE ARE STILL LOSING PLANETS TO THE COALITION.

THAT IS UNACCEPTABLE.

WE WILL STRIKE THE COALITION HEADQUARTERS ON TALESCRIA. YOU WILL SHUT DOWN THEIR DEFENSES AT THE TIME BEING TRANSMITTED TO YOU.

RESPOND.

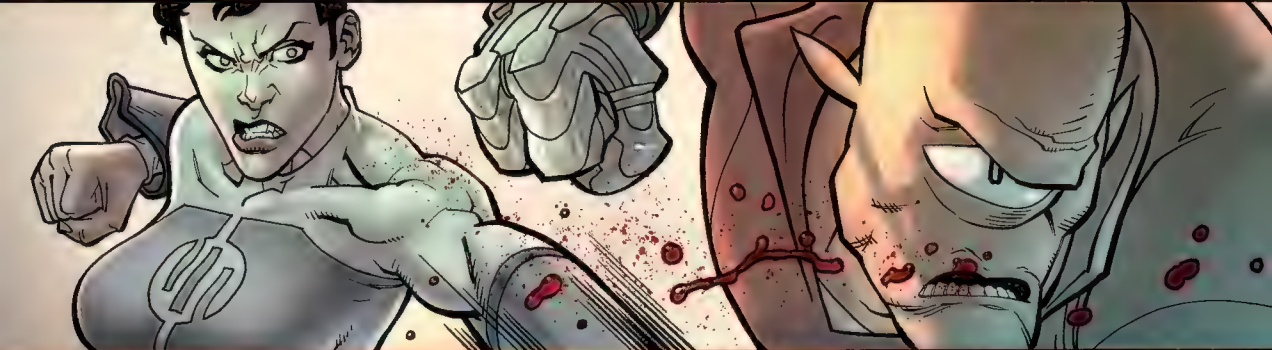
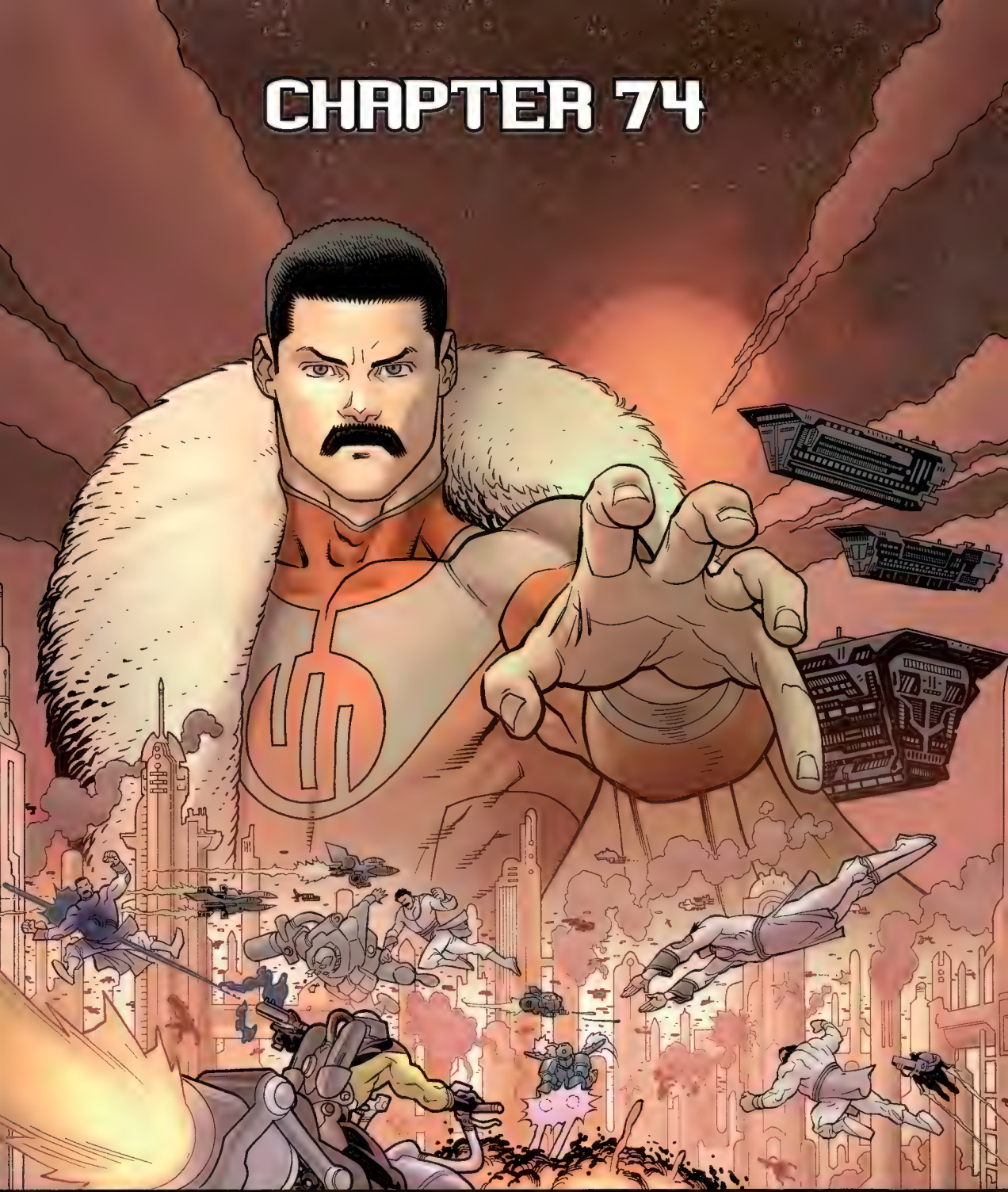
IT WILL BE DONE.

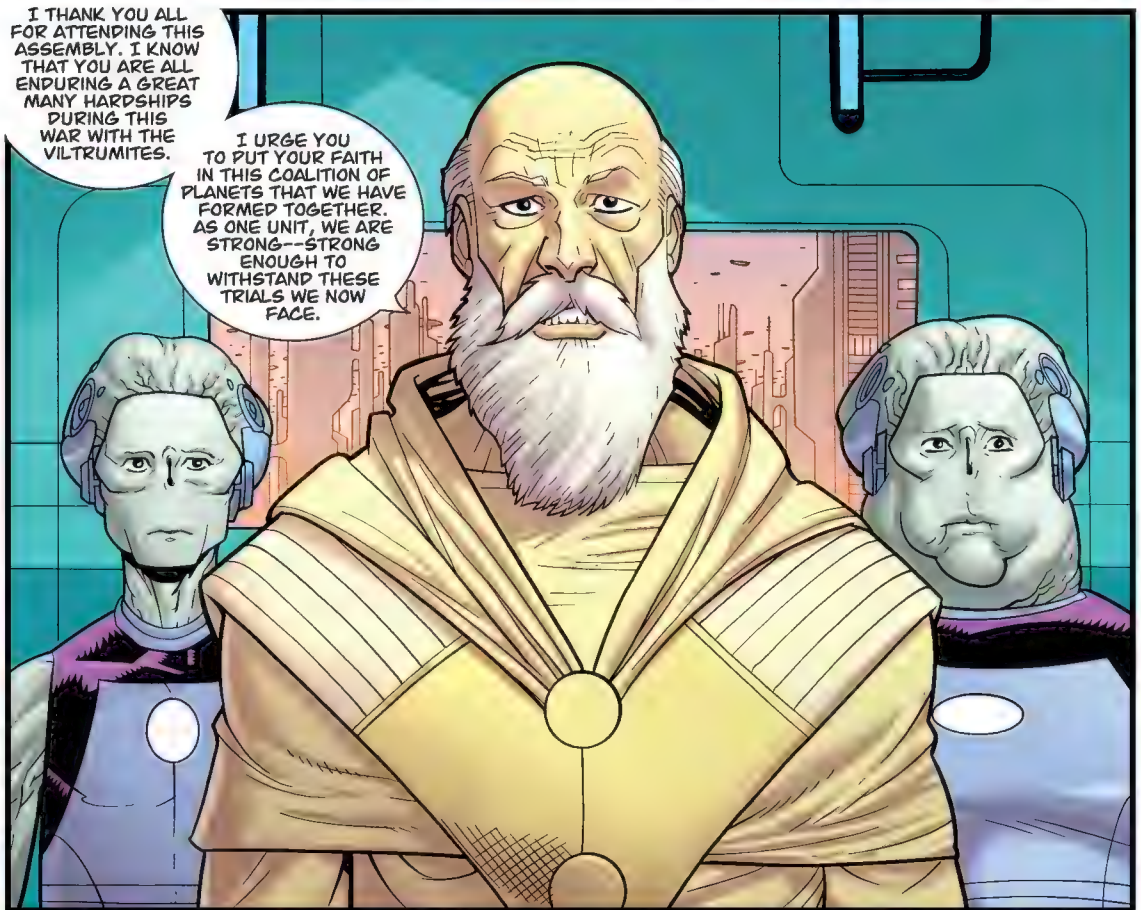
WHAT? WHAT WILL BE DONE?

WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?



CHAPTER 74





YOUR
ARMIES HAVE
BEEN EQUIPPED
WITH WEAPONS
DEVELOPED USING
THESE ITEMS THAT HAVE
BEEN RECOVERED. THAT
IS HOW WE'VE BEEN
ABLE TO HOLD THE
VILTRUMITE
FORCES AT
BAY.

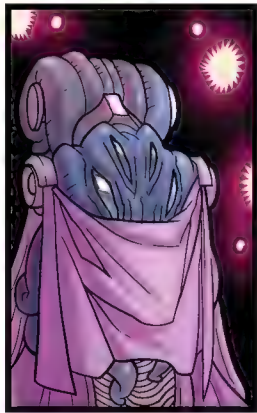
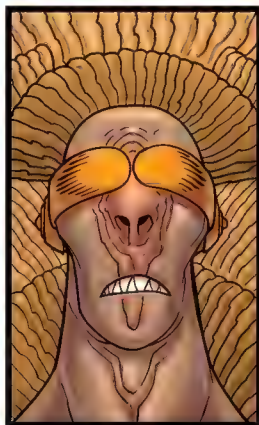
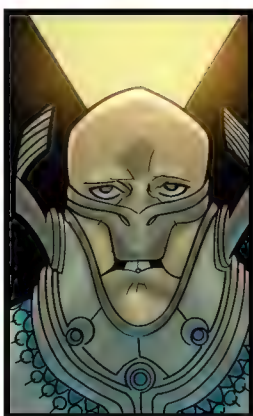
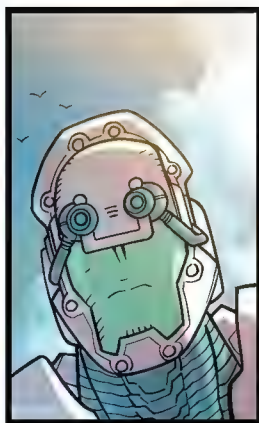
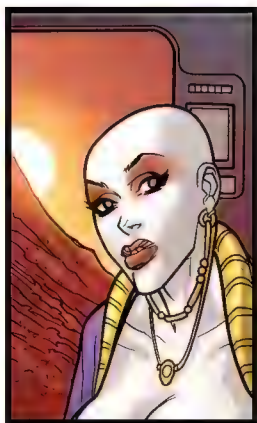
I REGRET
TO INFORM YOU
THAT THE LYNCHPIN
OF OUR PLAN, NOLAN
AND HIS TWO VILTRUMITE
SONS, HAVE GONE
MISSING, AND WILL NOT
BE PROVIDING US WITH
THE ASSISTANCE WE
WERE COUNTING
ON.

BUT FEAR
NOT, AS LONG
AS WE CONTINUE
TO WORK
TOGETHER, AS A
UNIFIED FRONT
AGAINST THE
VILTRUMITES--
WE WILL
SUCCEED.

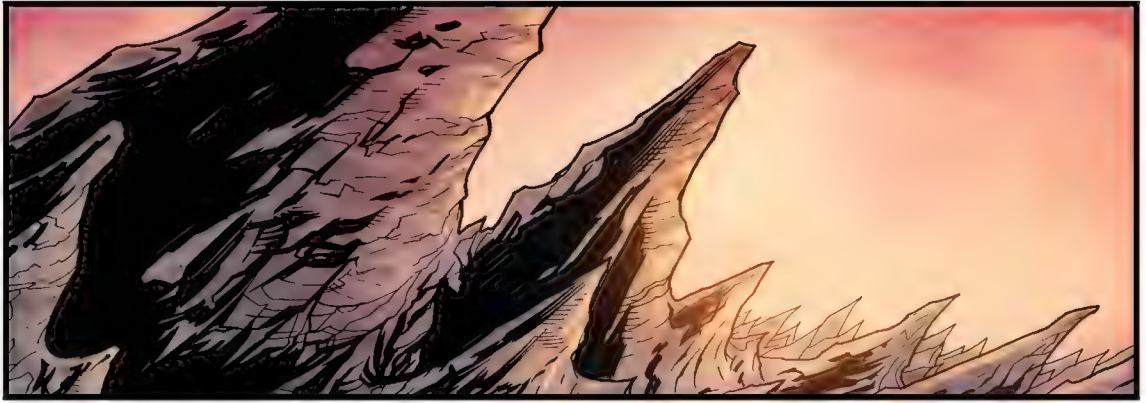
WE WILL
FINALLY RID
THE UNIVERSE
OF THIS
SCOURGE
ONCE AND
FOR ALL.

WE--









...I'M STILL VERY YOUNG BY THEIR STANDARDS, NOT THAT HUMAN KIDS MY CURRENT AGE DON'T HAVE RELATIONSHIPS OF SOME KIND. IT'S JUST... THEIR PARAMETERS OF ATTRACTION ARE SO NARROW.

I REMEMBER MY TIME ON THRAXA... I REMEMBER THOSE PEOPLE... FINDING SOME OF THEM TO BE ATTRACTIVE, EVEN AS YOUNG AS I WAS.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THAT ON EARTH. I FIND SOME EARTH PEOPLE ATTRACTIVE, BUT IT'S ONLY THE MOST UNIQUE AMONG THEM.



MOTHER TOOK ME TO A RESTAURANT ONE TIME THAT HAD A LOBSTER TANK...

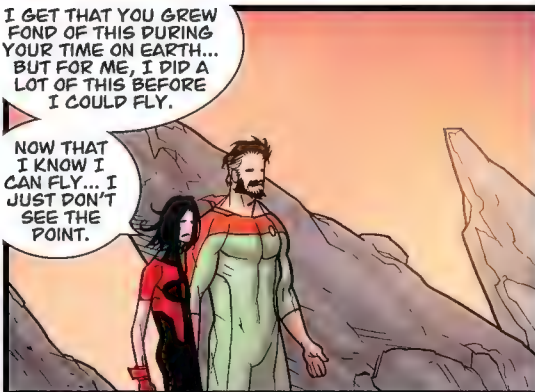


I MEAN, I STILL ATE ONE... BUT I THOUGHT IT WAS... BEAUTIFUL.



THERE ARE SOME GIRLS I COULD INTRODUCE YOU TO ON TALESCRIA. THE DAUGHTER OF THE WOMAN WHO LIVES NEXT TO ME IN MY BUILDING HAS A... SIMILAR APPEARANCE.

HAVE YOU ENJOYED YOUR WALK?



I GET THAT YOU GREW FOND OF THIS DURING YOUR TIME ON EARTH... BUT FOR ME, I DID A LOT OF THIS BEFORE I COULD FLY.

NOW THAT I KNOW I CAN FLY... I JUST DON'T SEE THE POINT.

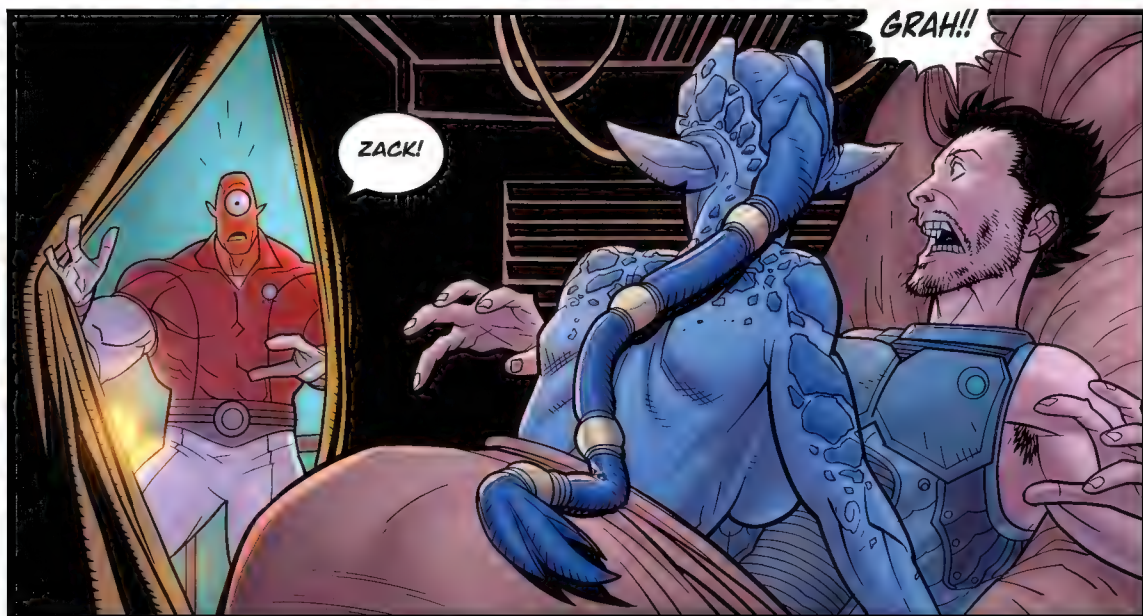
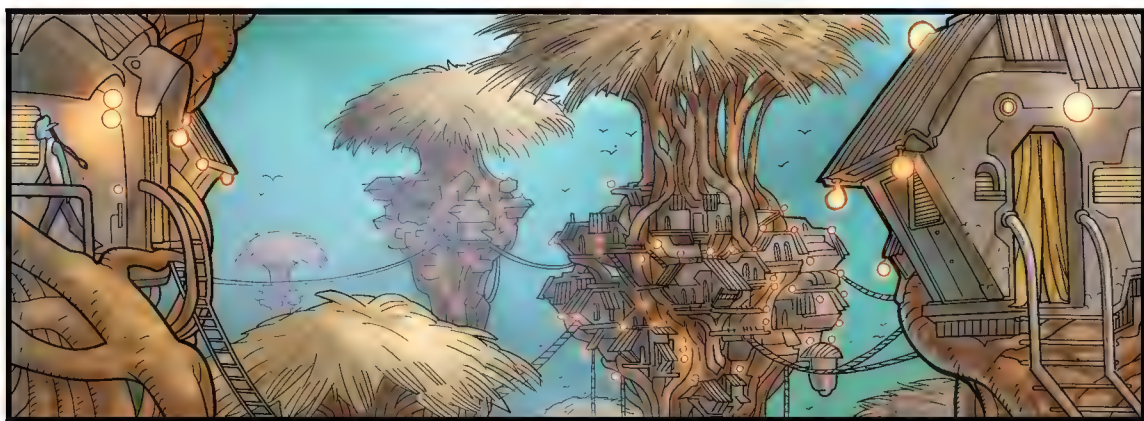


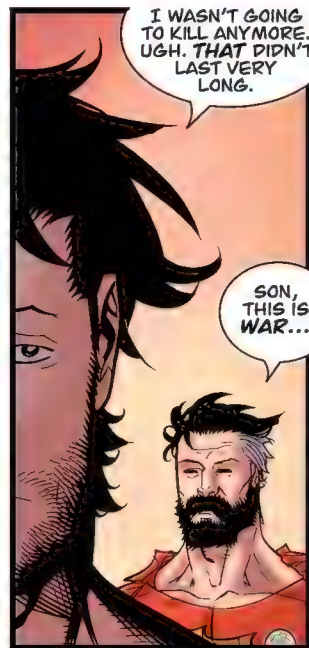
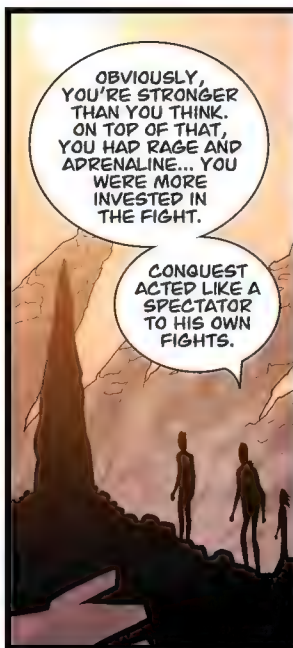
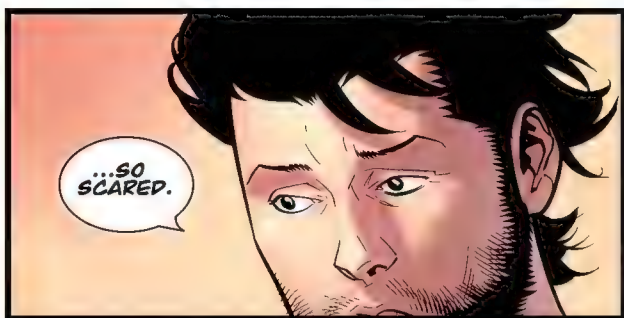
IT'S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE. YOU SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY WHEN--

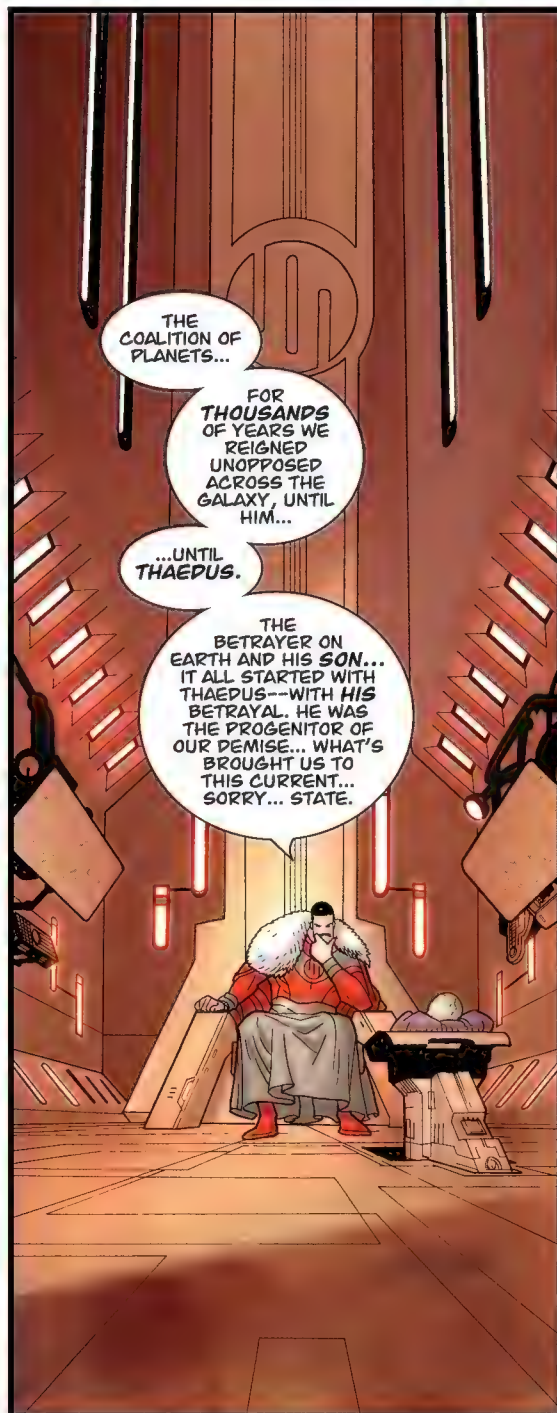
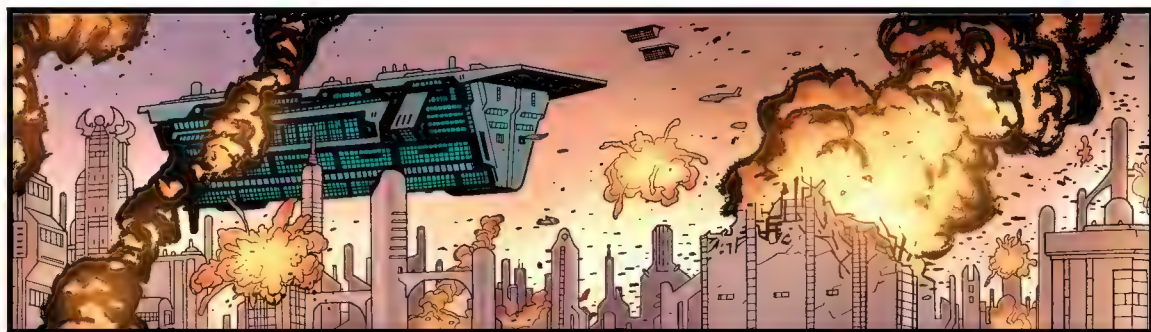
DAD?

AHEAD, IN THE CAMP. WHAT IS--?









THE
COALITION OF
PLANETS...

FOR
THOUSANDS
OF YEARS WE
REIGNED
UNOPPOSED
ACROSS THE
GALAXY, UNTIL
HIM...

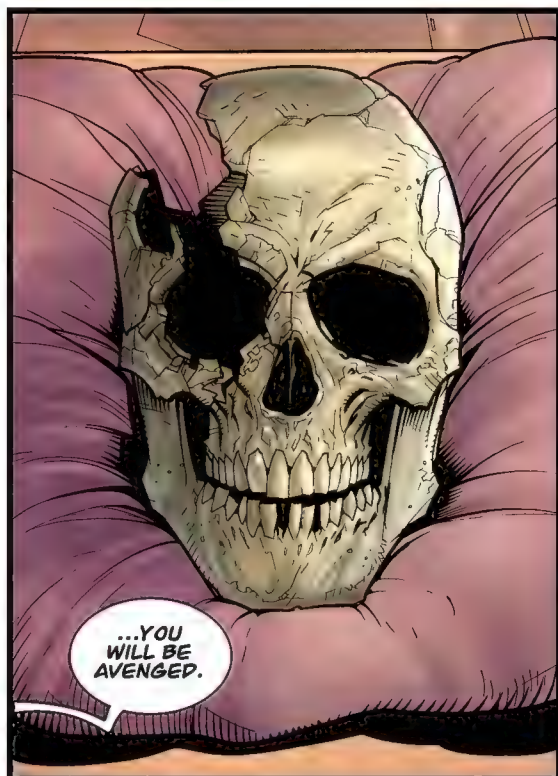
...UNTIL
THAEDUS.

THE
BETRAYER ON
EARTH AND HIS SON...
IT ALL STARTED WITH
THAEDUS--WITH HIS
BETRAYAL. HE WAS
THE PROGENITOR OF
OUR DEMISE... WHAT'S
BROUGHT US TO
THIS CURRENT...
SORRY... STATE.

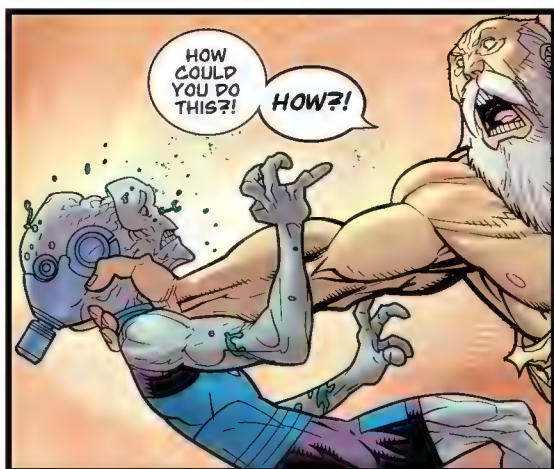
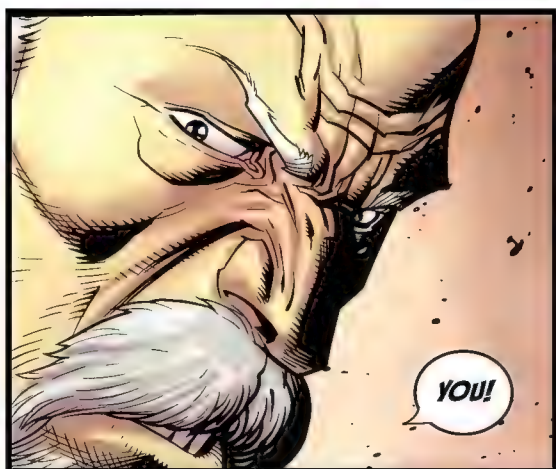
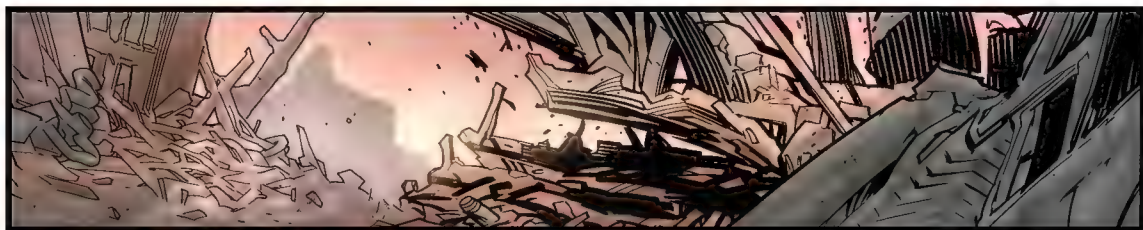
AS THE BATTLE RAGES
ACROSS OUR PLANETS--
OUR CONTROL OF THE
GALAXY BEGINS SLIPPING
THROUGH OUR GRASP--
WE HAVE BROUGHT
THE FIGHT TO HIM...
TO TALESCRIA.

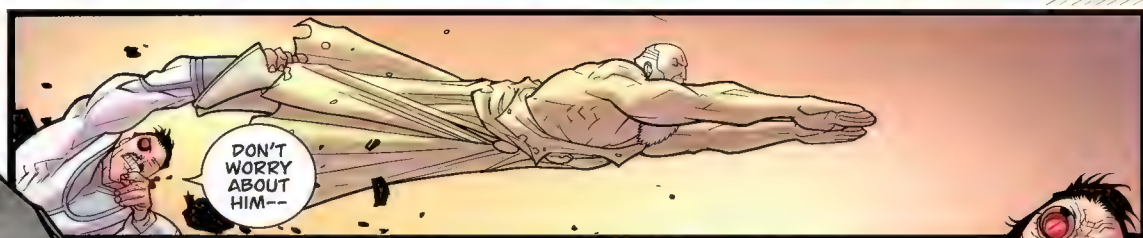
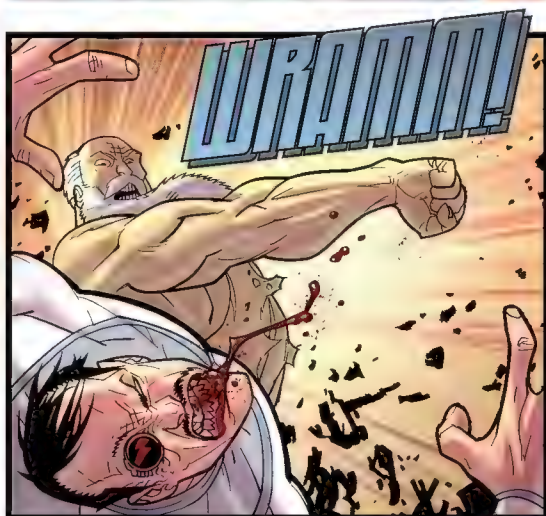
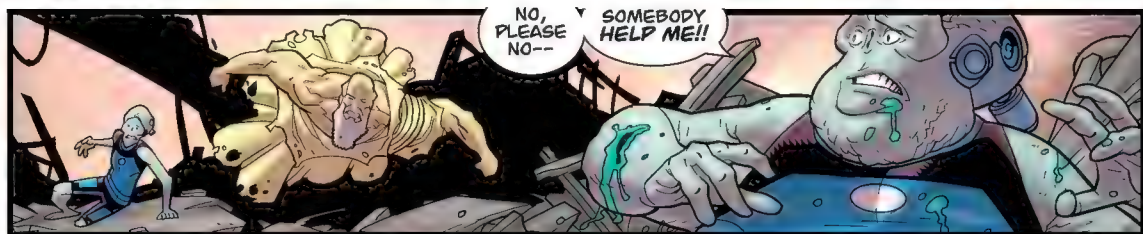
WITH THAEDUS
DEAD AND THE
COALITION IN DISARRAY,
THIS WAR WILL BE
OVER, WE WILL BE
THE VICTORS.

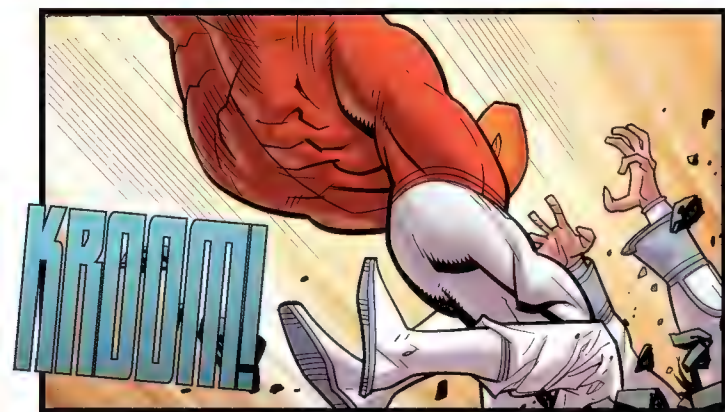
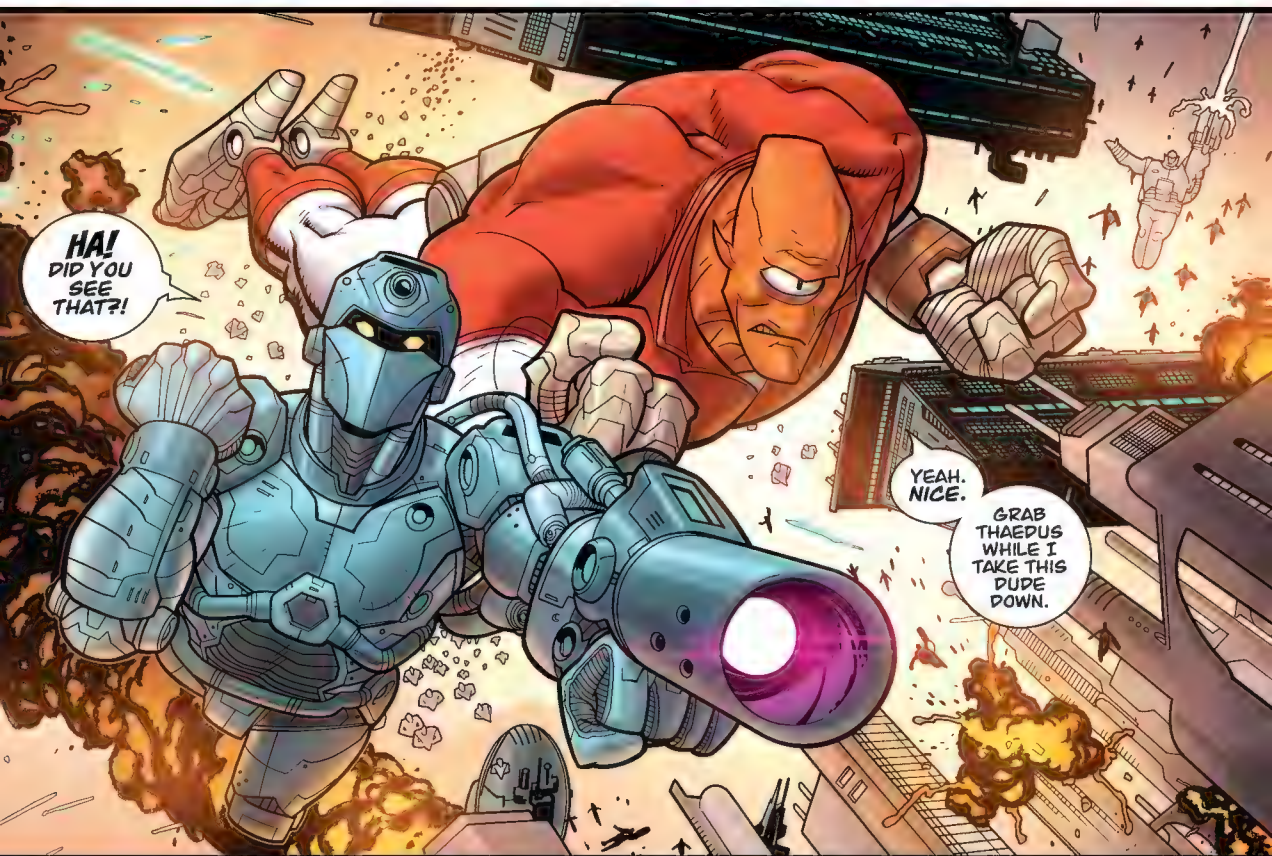
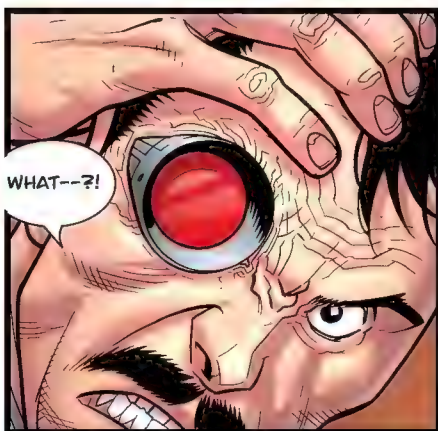
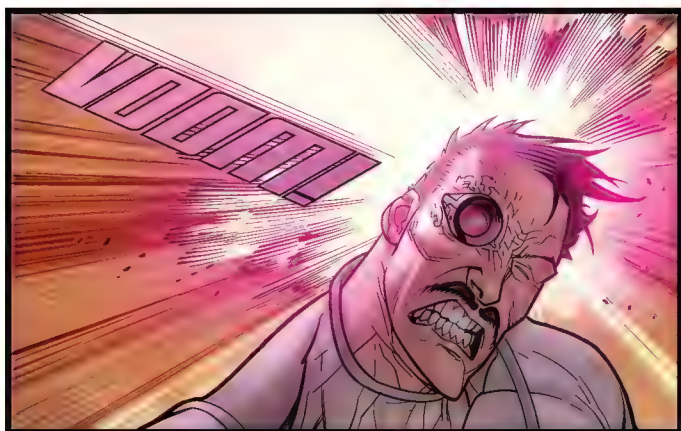
AND
YOU, MY
LIEGE...

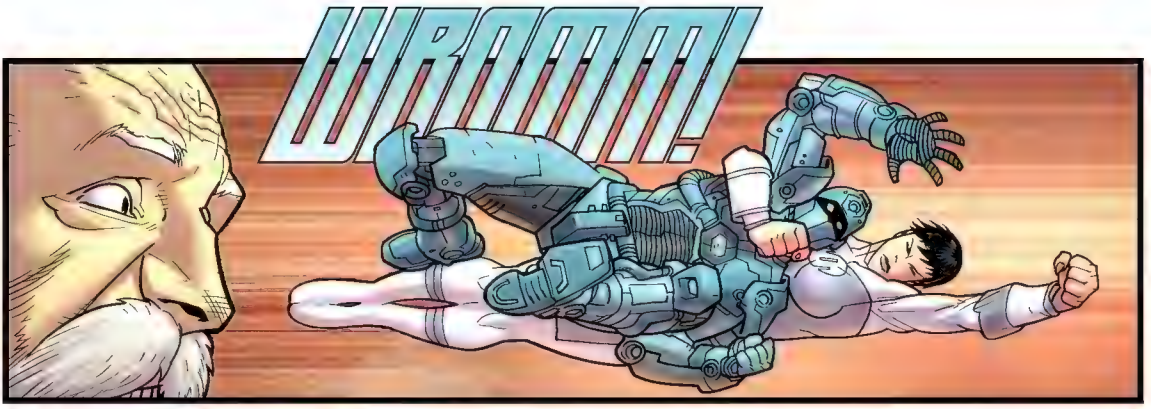


...YOU
WILL BE
AVENGED.



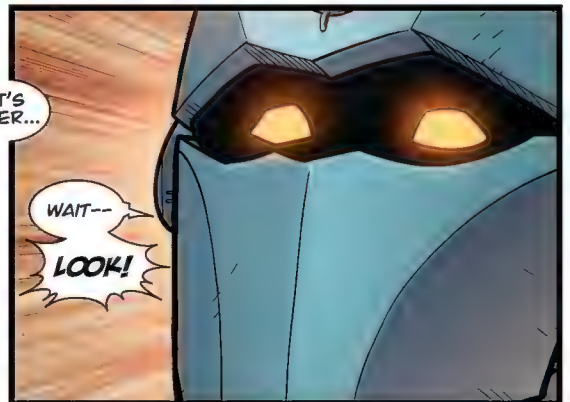






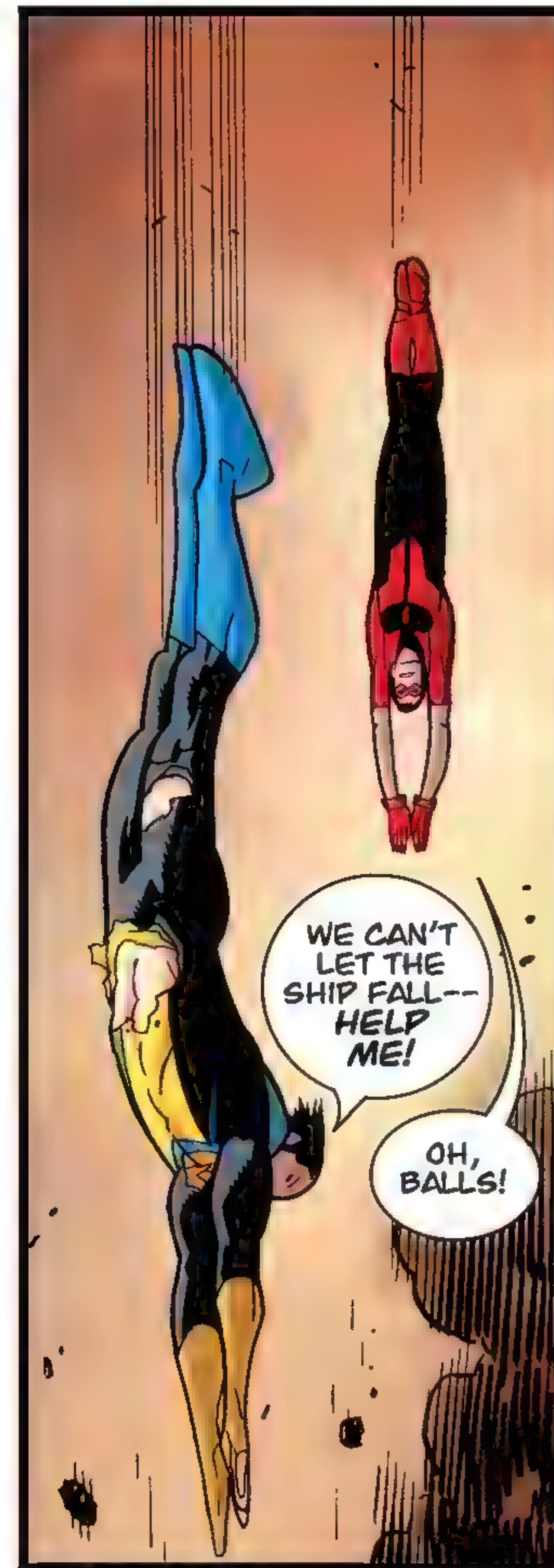
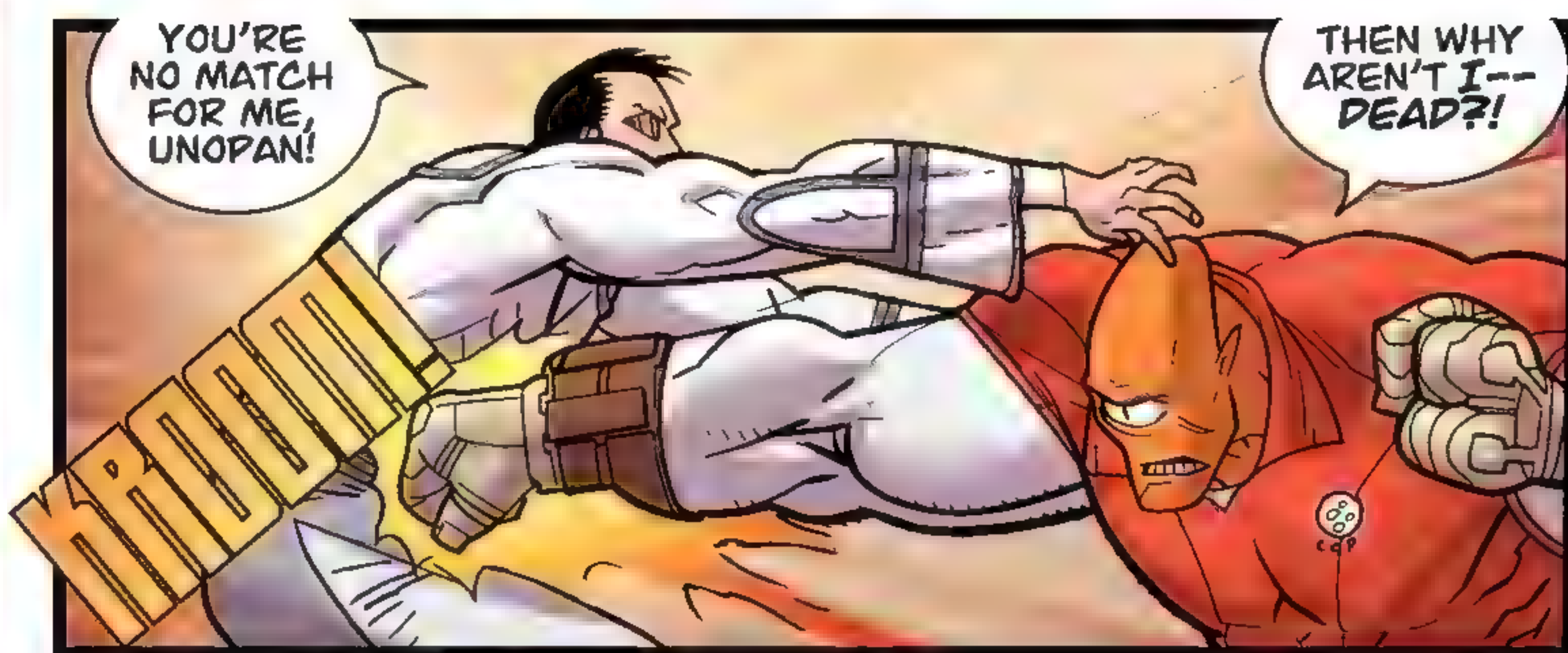
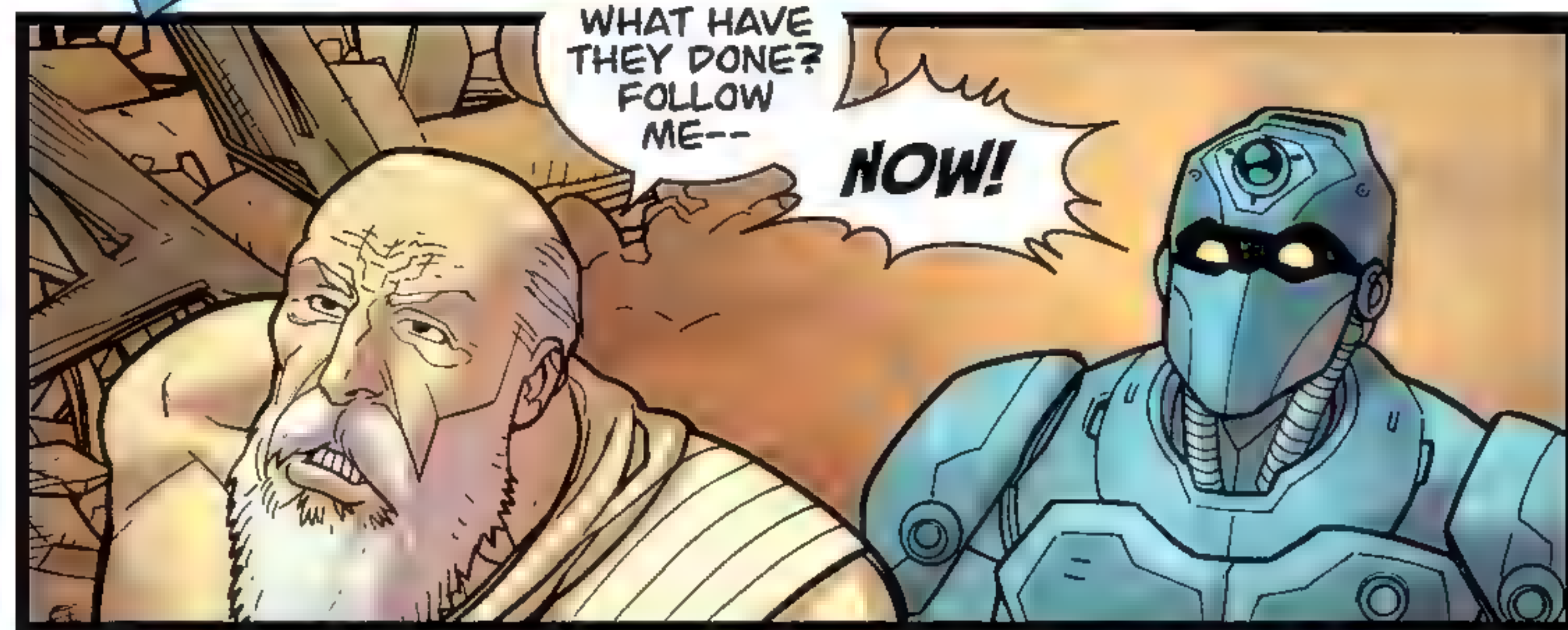
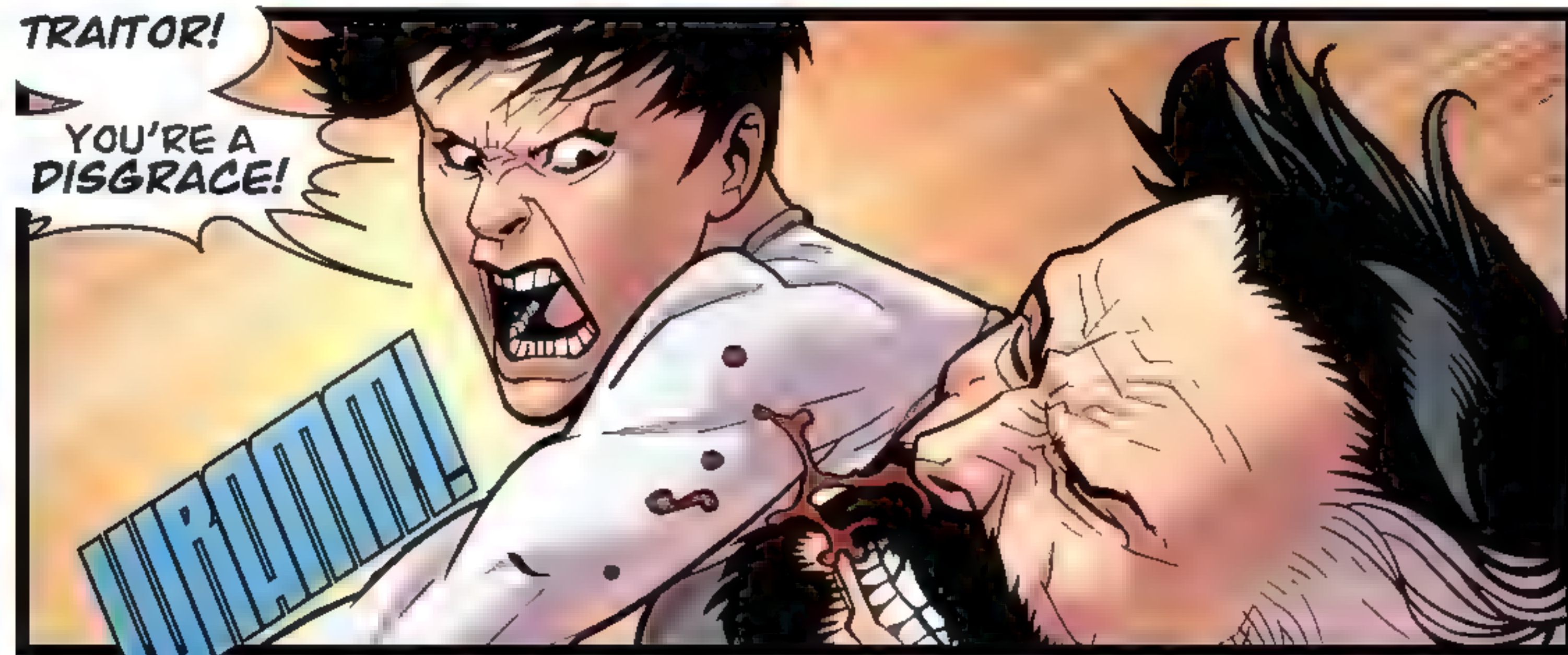
I'LL SEE YOUR WEAK BODY SPILL THROUGH THE SEAMS OF YOUR TECHNOLOGY, GELDARIAN!

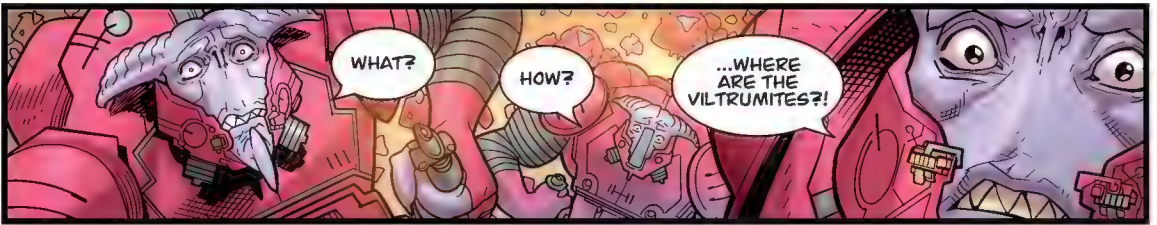
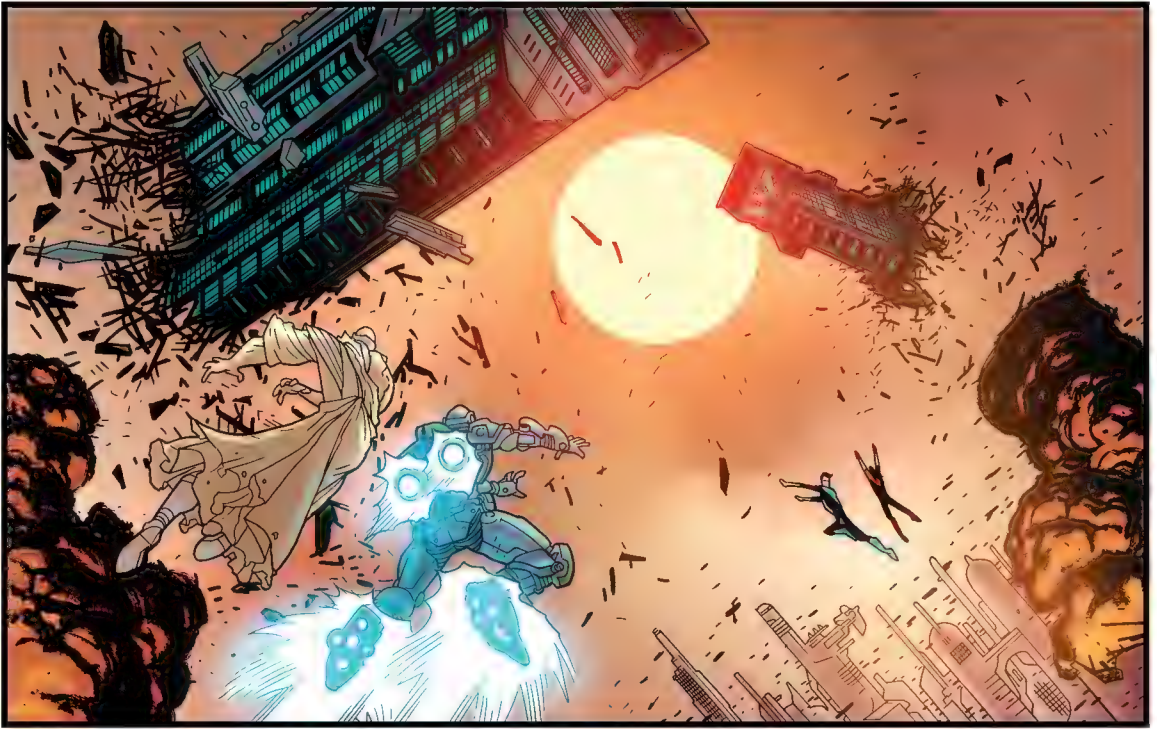
EXTERIOR PRESSURE AT 90% CAPACITY, BREACH IMMINENT.

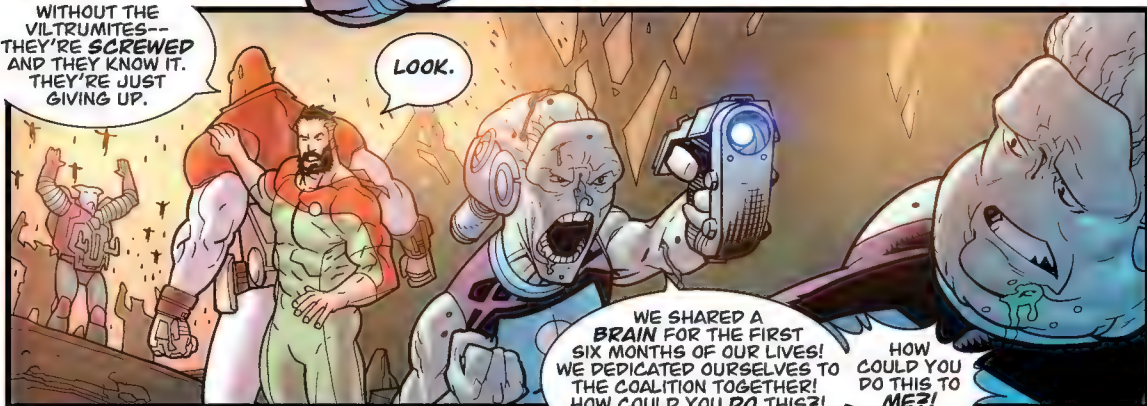
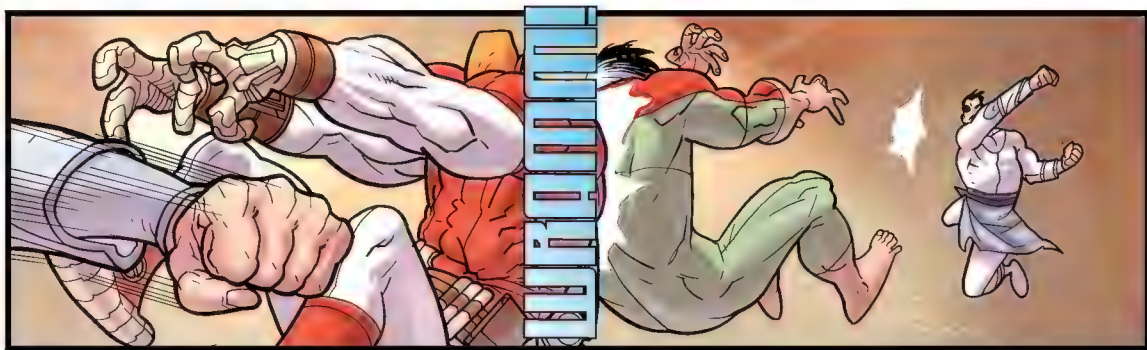














LOOK WHAT YOU MADE
ME DO! YOU THINK I
WANTED THIS?! I CAN'T
BELIEVE YOU WERE
WORKING FOR
THEM!

TALK! TELL ME WHAT THE
VILTRUMITES' PLANS ARE!
TELL ME EVERYTHING
YOU KNOW.



DON'T
MAKE ME
SHOOT YOU
AGAIN!



ENOUGH.

LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE--
YOU BROUGHT THEM HERE,
YOU CAUSED THIS
DESTRUCTION--YOU'VE
BETRAYED US ALL.

YOU WILL
PAY FOR THESE
CRIMES--BUT
FIRST, TELL US
WHERE THE
VILTRUMITES ARE
GOING--RIGHT
NOW.

DOESN'T MATTER
NOW--DOESN'T
MATTER AT
ALL.

IT'S TOO
LATE, YOU'VE
GOT NO HOPE
OF WINNING
THIS WAR.
THEY SAID--
THEY--

IF THIS BATTLE
WAS LOST, THEY
WERE TO RECONVENE
ON THE PLANET
VILTRUM TO STAGE
A COUNTER-
ATTACK.

YOU DON'T
STAND A
CHANCE. THEY'RE
ALL GOING
THERE--

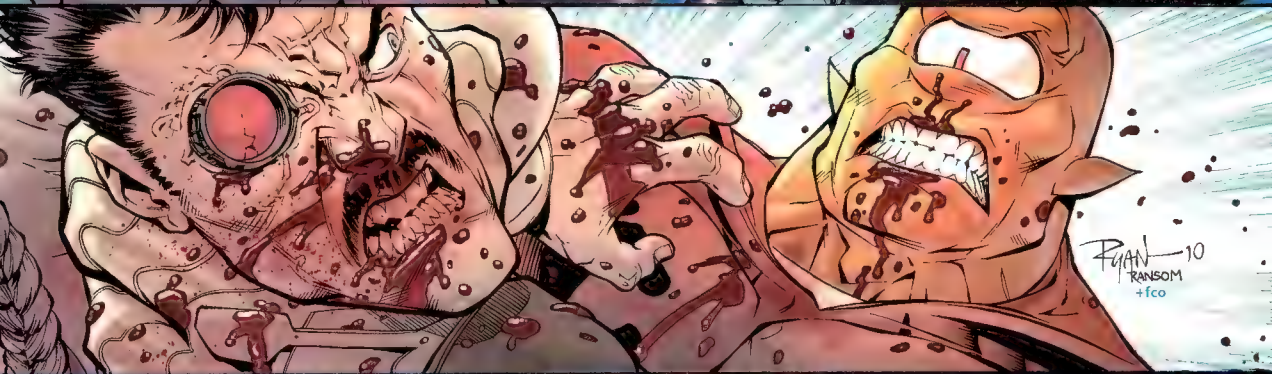
ALL OF
THEM.

IT'S
OVER.



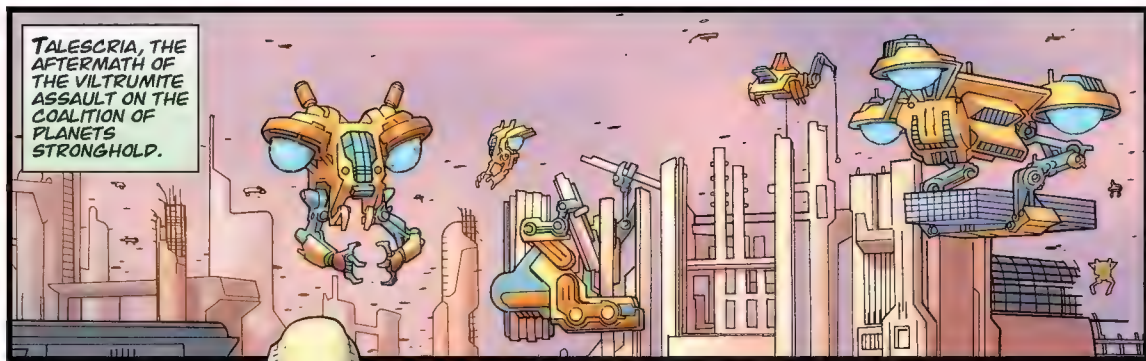


CHAPTER 75



Ryan-10
RANSOM
+fco

TALESCRIA, THE AFTERMATH OF THE VILTRUMITE ASSAULT ON THE COALITION OF PLANETS STRONGHOLD.



THE VILTRUMITE WAR IS OVER.

OVER THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS WE'VE RECEIVED WORD FROM NEARLY EIGHTY-PERCENT OF THE WORLDS COUNTED AS PART OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

THEY'VE BEEN ABANDONED BY THEIR VILTRUMITE OVERLORDS. SEEING THAT WE NOW HAVE VILTRUMITES ON OUR SIDE HAS TURNED THEM TO OUR FAVOR.

THEY SEE THE COALITION AS BEING **STRONGER** THAN THE EMPIRE, AND WITHOUT THEIR BOSSES WATCHING OVER THEM...

...THEY'VE SWITCHED SIDES.



BUT WHERE HAVE THESE VILTRUMITES GONE?

THEIR RECENT DISAPPEARANCE SEEMS TO CORROBORATE MY ASSISTANT'S INTEL ABOUT THE VILTRUMITES REGROUPING ON VILTRUM, STAGING ONE FINAL STRIKE AGAINST US.

THIS IS THEIR LAST GASP--AND IT WILL NOT SUCCEED.

WE WILL LAUNCH A COUNTER-ATTACK. WE WILL STRIKE BEFORE THEY HAVE TIME TO DO ANY PLANNING.

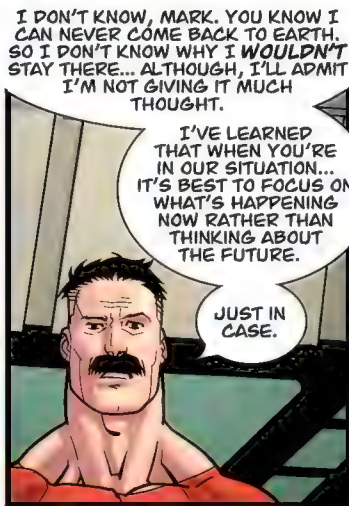
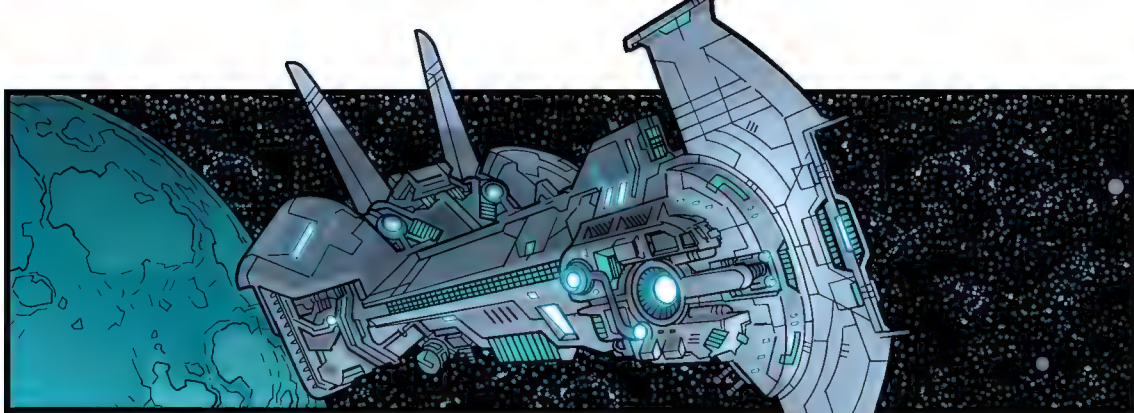
WE WILL MEET THEM ON THEIR HOME TURF AND DESTROY WHAT LITTLE HOPE THEY HAVE OF SUCCEEDING.



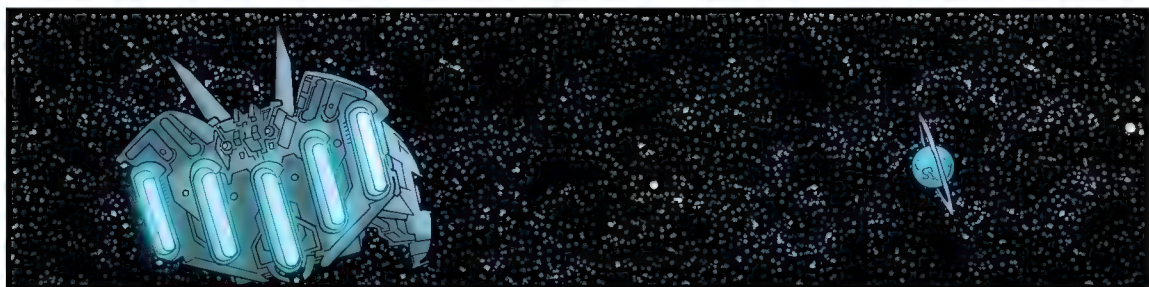
ARE YOU
READY
TO FINISH
THIS?

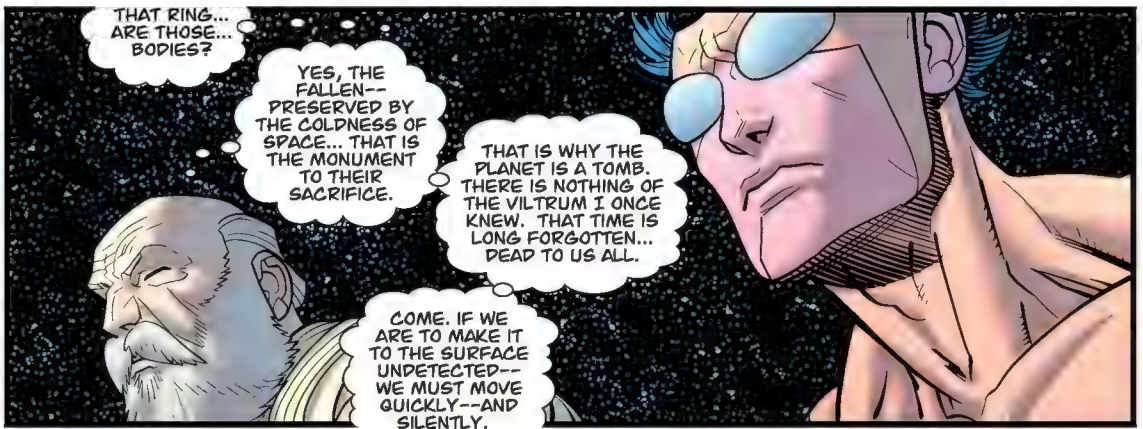
HELL
YEAH!

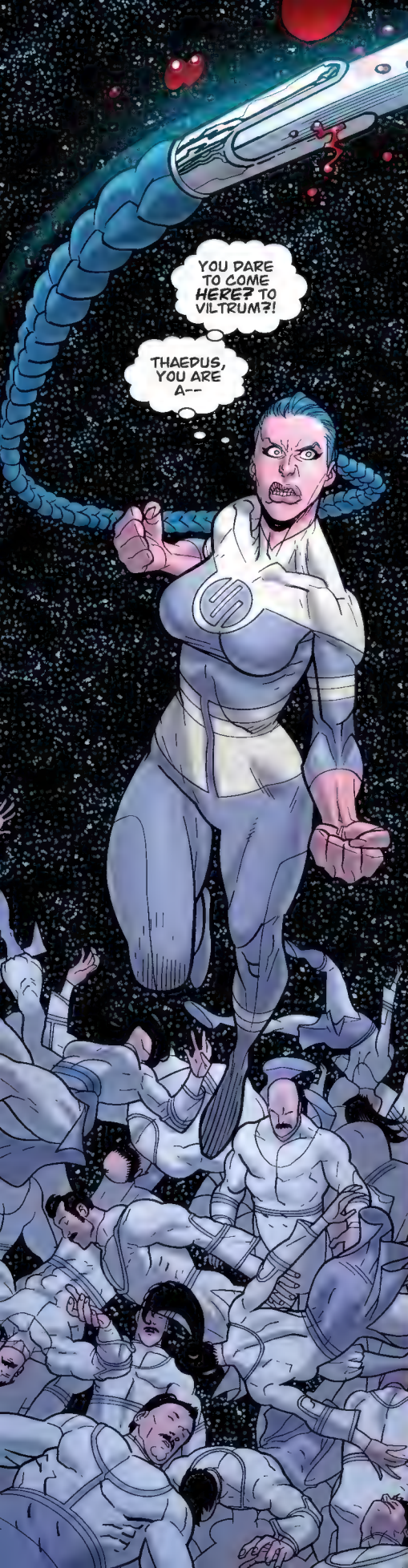






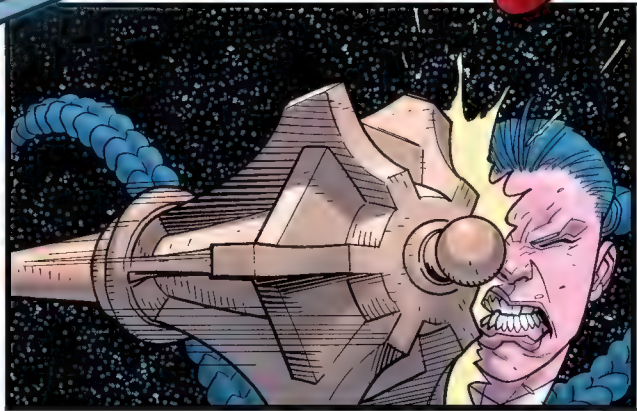






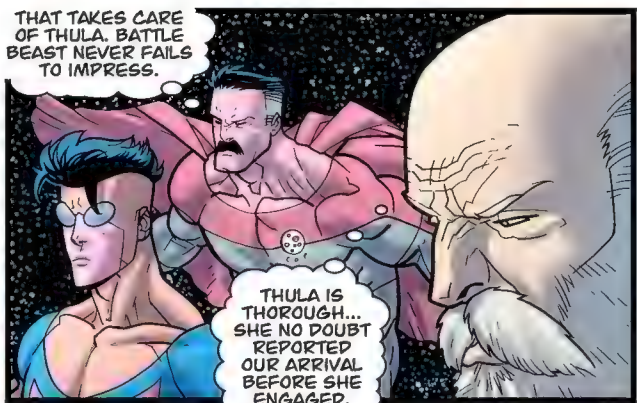
YOU DARE
TO COME
HERE? TO
VILTRUM?!

THAEDUS,
YOU ARE
A--



TOO MUCH
THINKING!
MORE
FIGHTING!

MORE!



THAT TAKES CARE
OF THULA. BATTLE
BEAST NEVER FAILS
TO IMPRESS.

THULA IS
THOROUGH...
SHE NO DOUBT
REPORTED
OUR ARRIVAL
BEFORE SHE
ENGAGED.



LOOKS
LIKE IT!

OKAY...
THIS IS IT,
EVERYONE.

GET
READY.



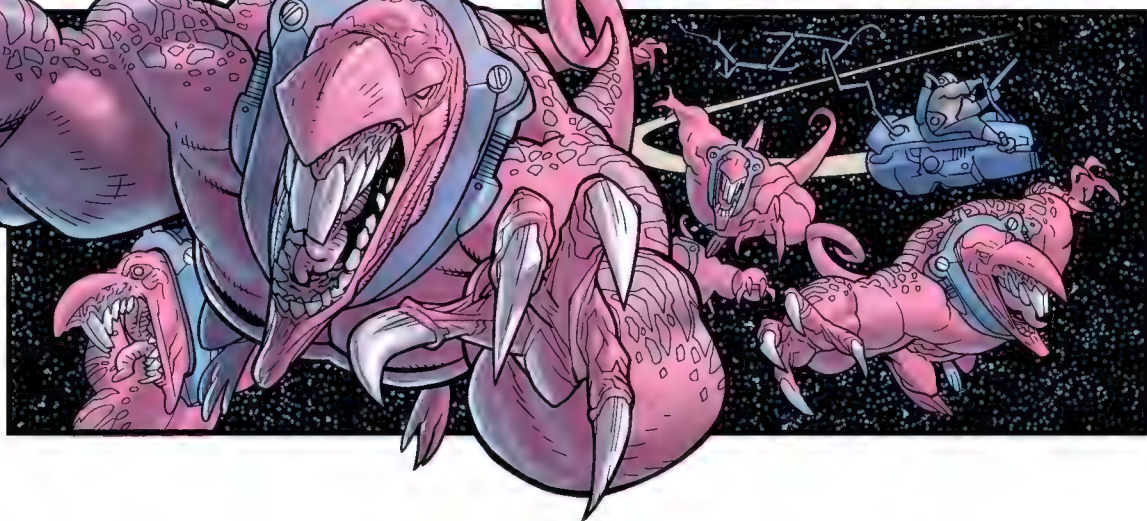
TO ALL
WHO MAKE
THEMSELVES
ENEMIES OF
THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE--!

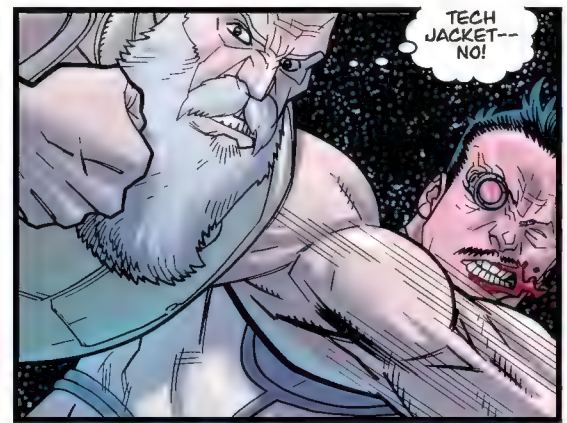
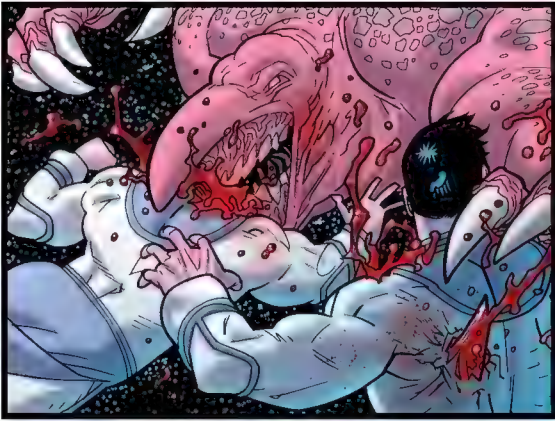
PREPARE
FOR YOUR
DEATHS!

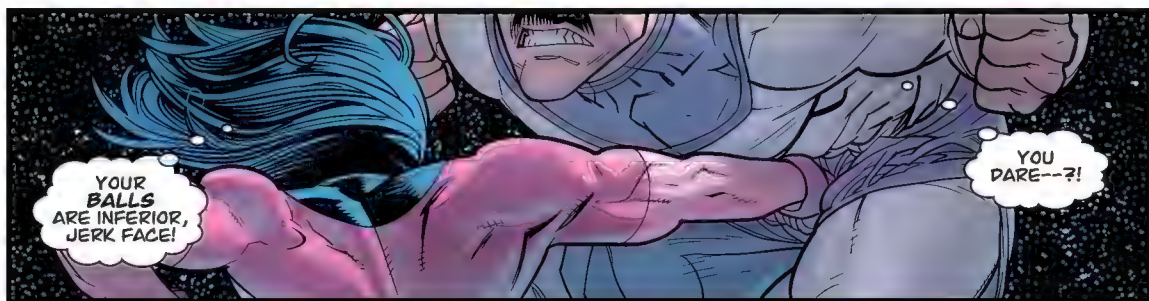
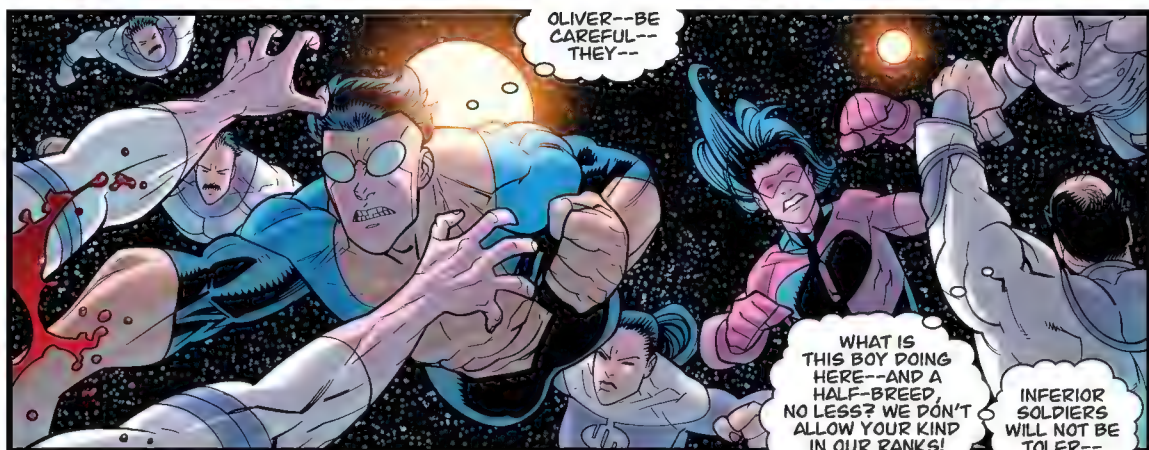
WE ARE GROSSLY
OUT-NUMBERED...
MOVE FAST FROM
OPPONENT TO OPPONENT.
TRY NOT TO LET THEM
OVERPOWER YOU--WE'RE
GOING TO NEED TO MOVE
QUICKLY IF WE'RE TO
SURVIVE THIS.



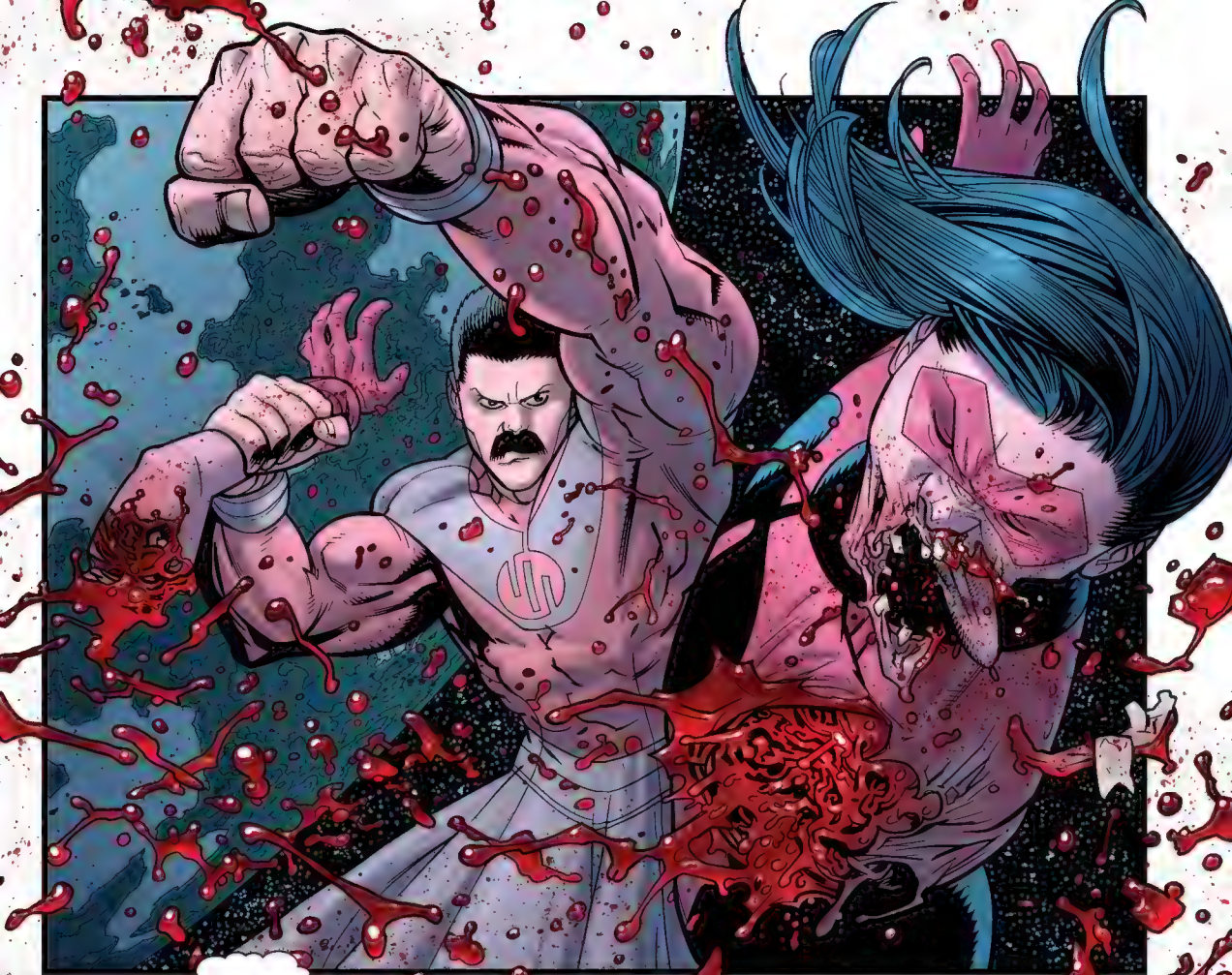
IF ONLY
SPACE
RACER
COULD--











OLIVER!

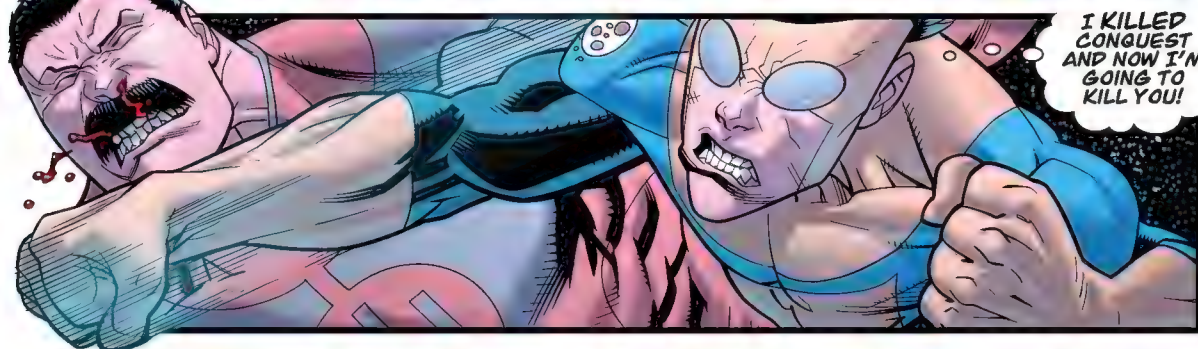
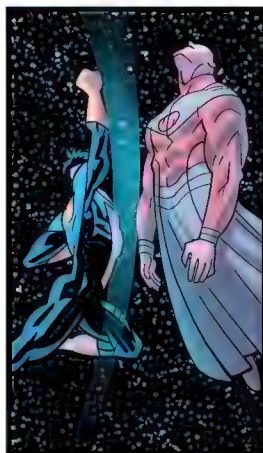
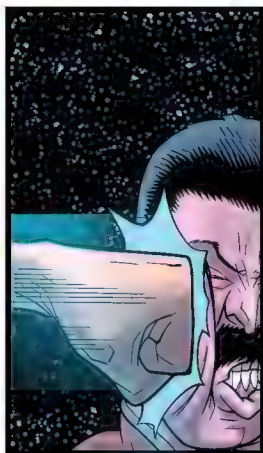
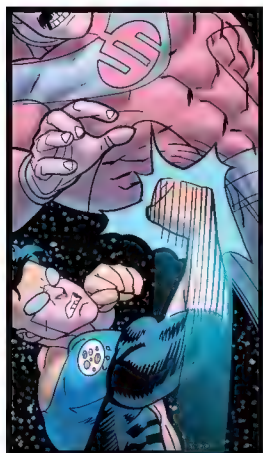
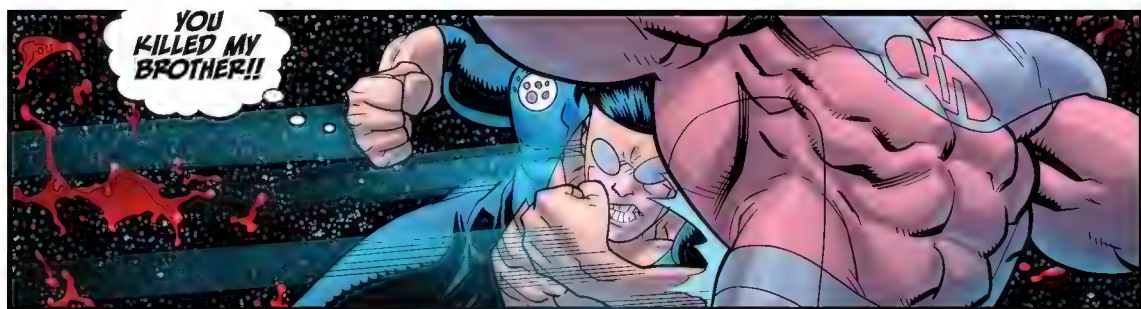


GET BACK HERE!



SEEMED LIKE SUCH A NICE BOY...

MY BROTHER...



WHAT HE SAYS
IS TRUE--MY
SON KILLED
CONQUEST!

STILL SO
CONFIDENT
IN YOUR
VICTORY?

NOW,
WHILE THEY'RE
DISTRACTED--
WE HAVE TO MAKE A
MOVE--SOMETHING
THEY WON'T
EXPECT.

SPACE
RACER--
TO ME!

YES!

YES!!

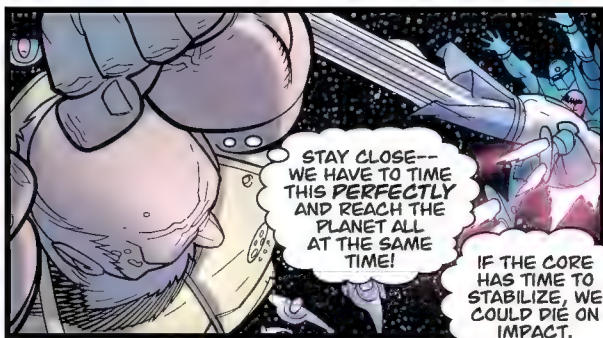
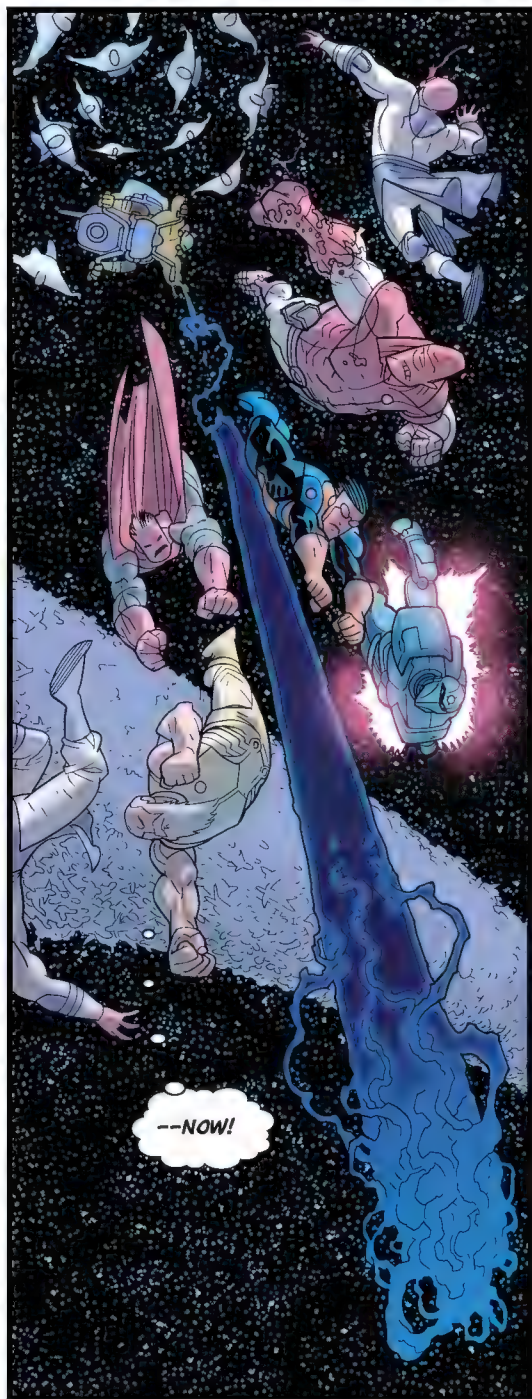
WHAT'S
GOING
ON OVER
THERE?

BEATS
ME.

ALL OF
YOU--
WITH ME--
NOW!

WE'LL
ONLY GET
ONE SHOT
AT THIS!

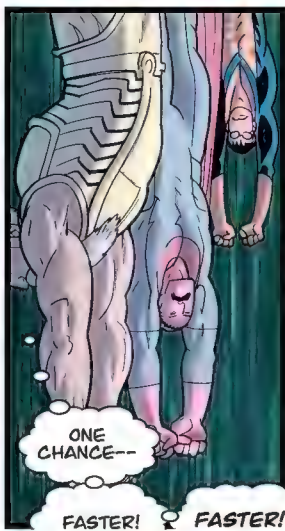
SPACE
RACER--
DEAD CENTER,
FIRE YOUR
GUN--



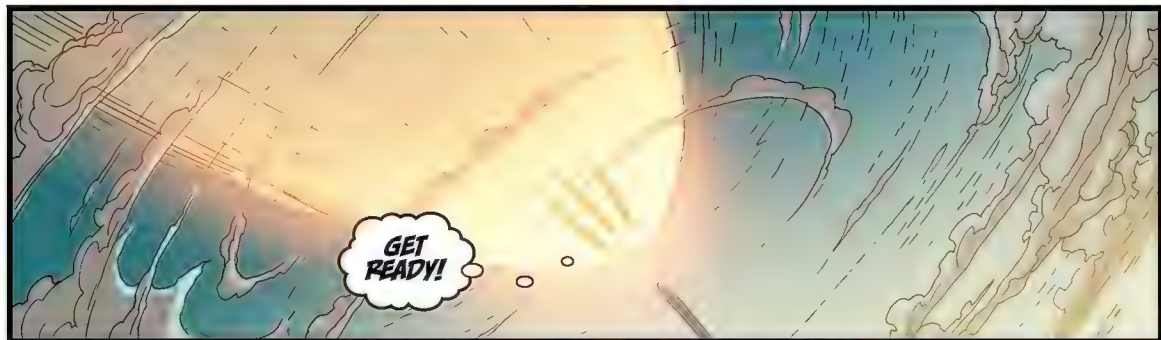
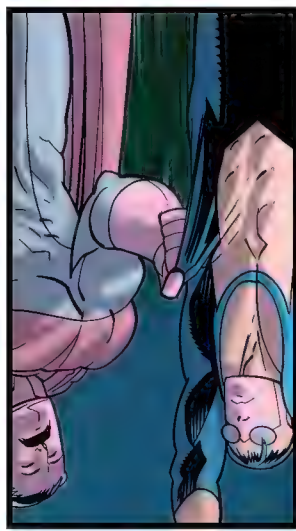
IF THE CORE HAS TIME TO STABILIZE, WE COULD DIE ON IMPACT.

WAIT, WHAT ARE WE-- ACK!

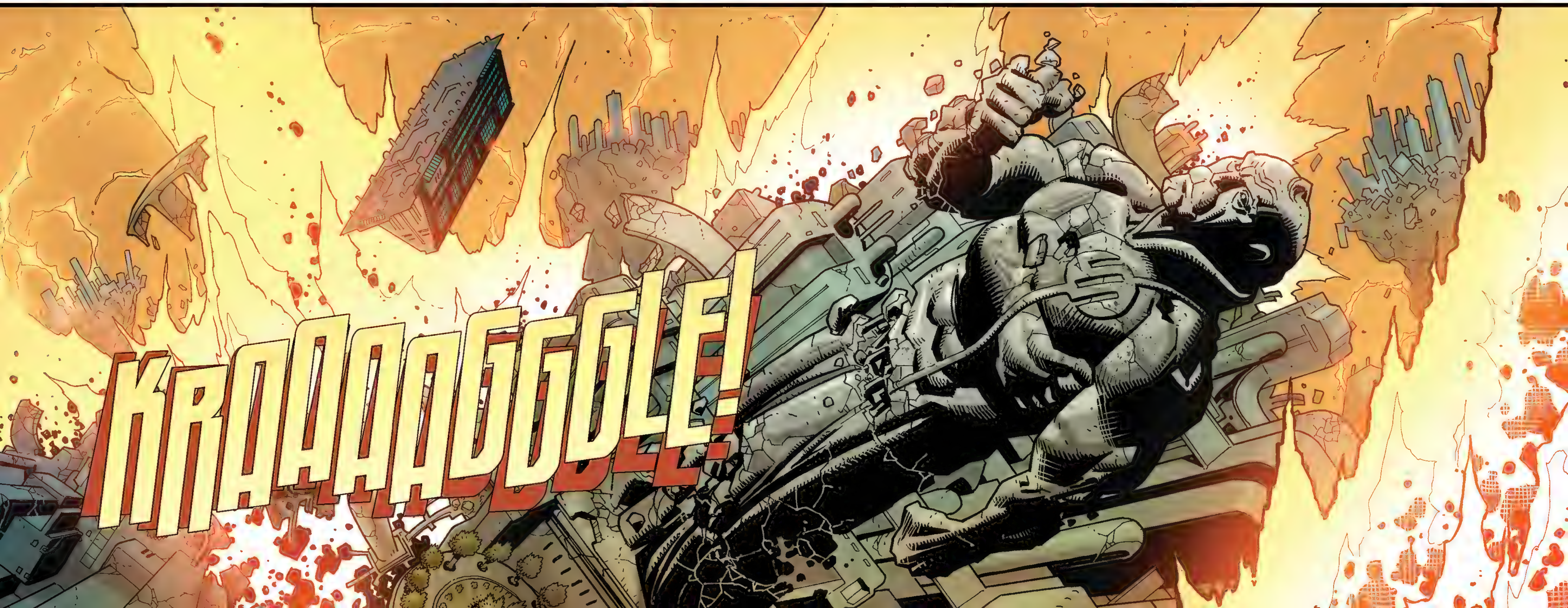
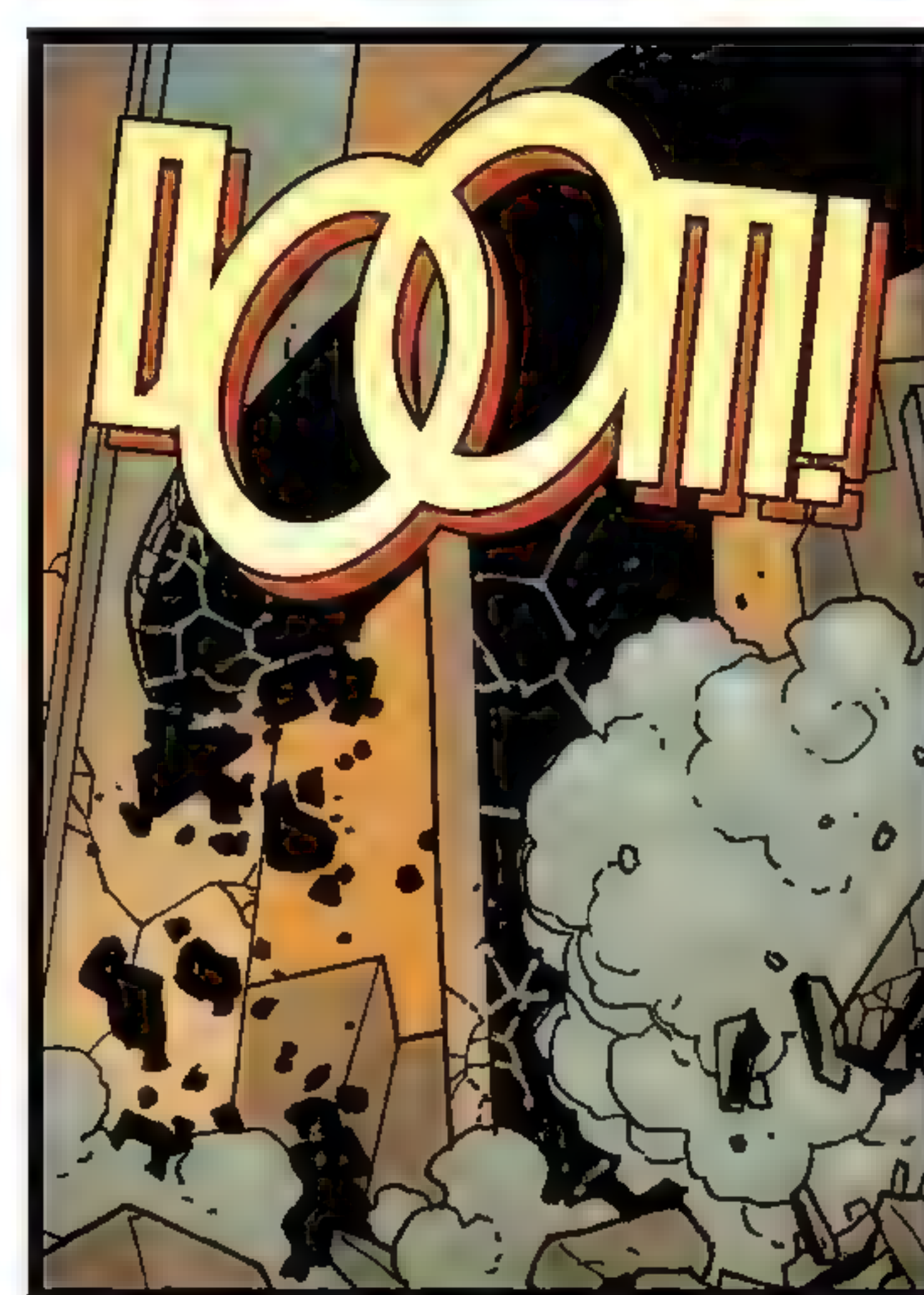
CRAP!



FASTER! ♀ FASTER!







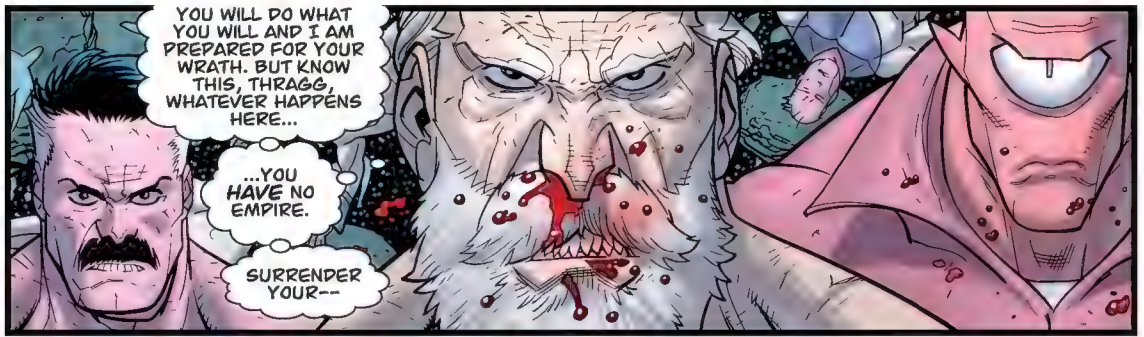






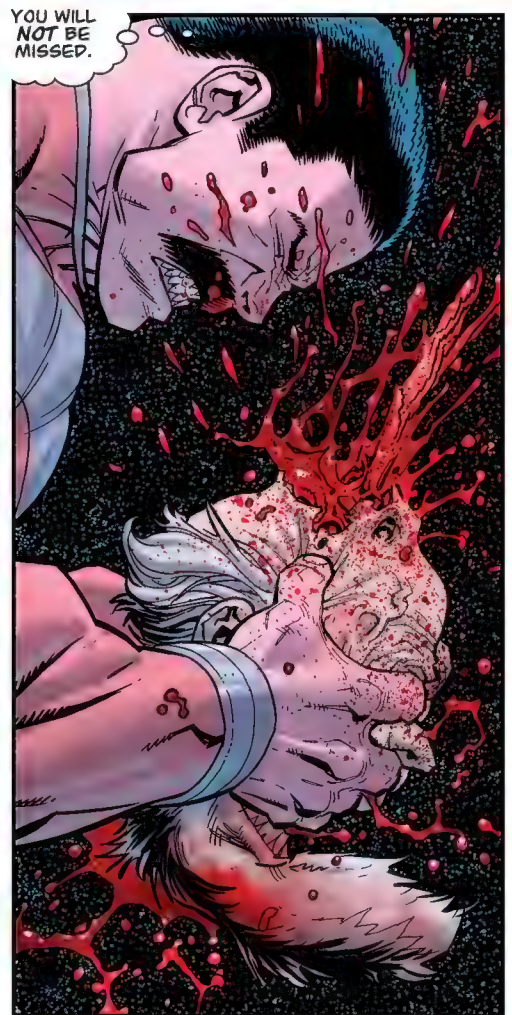
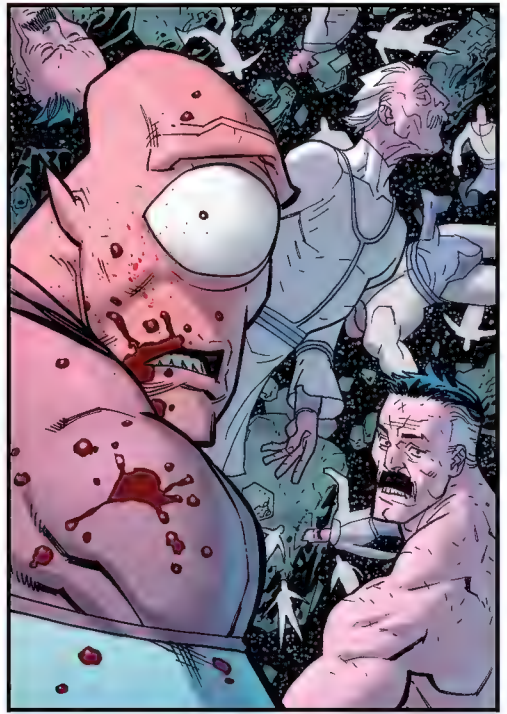
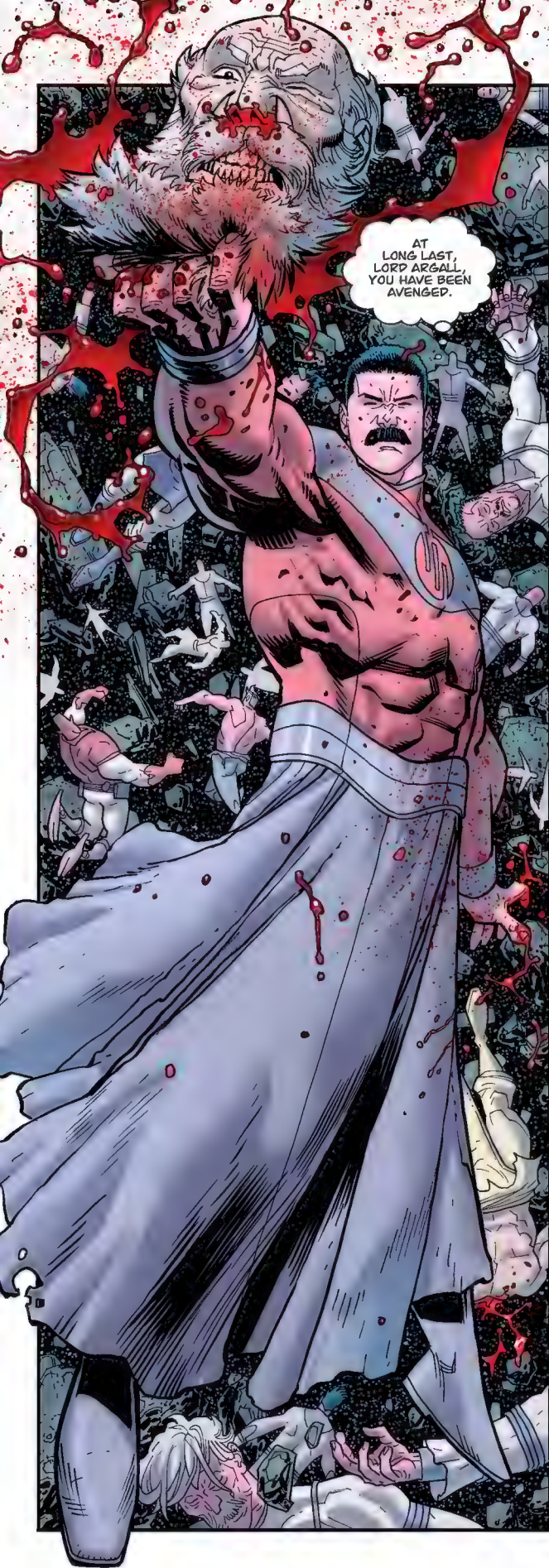


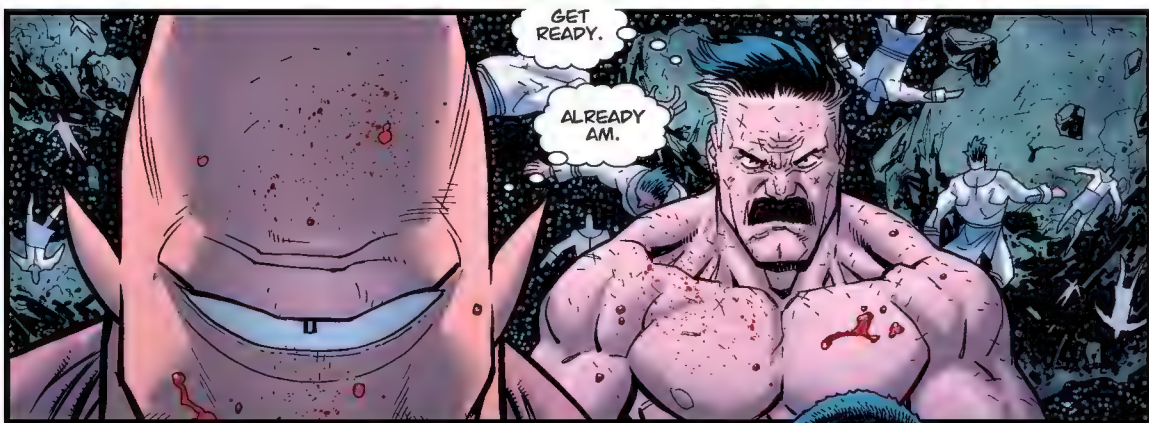
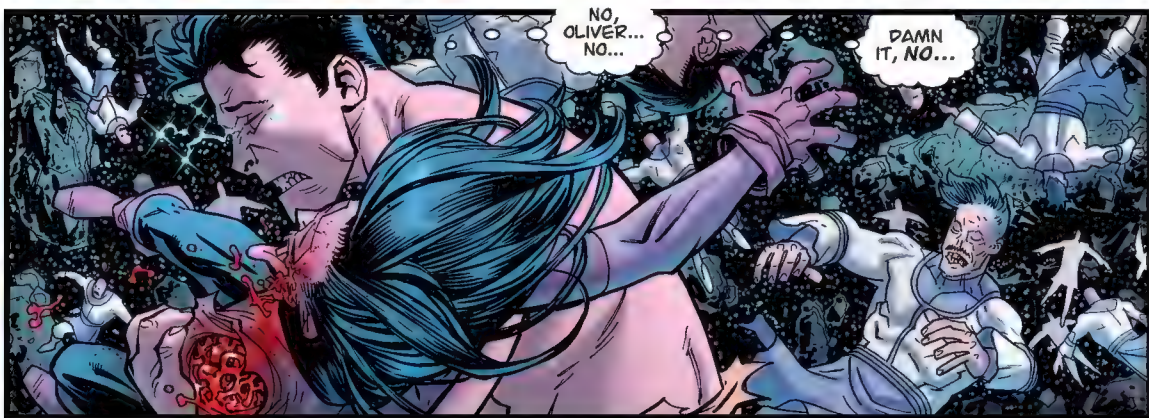
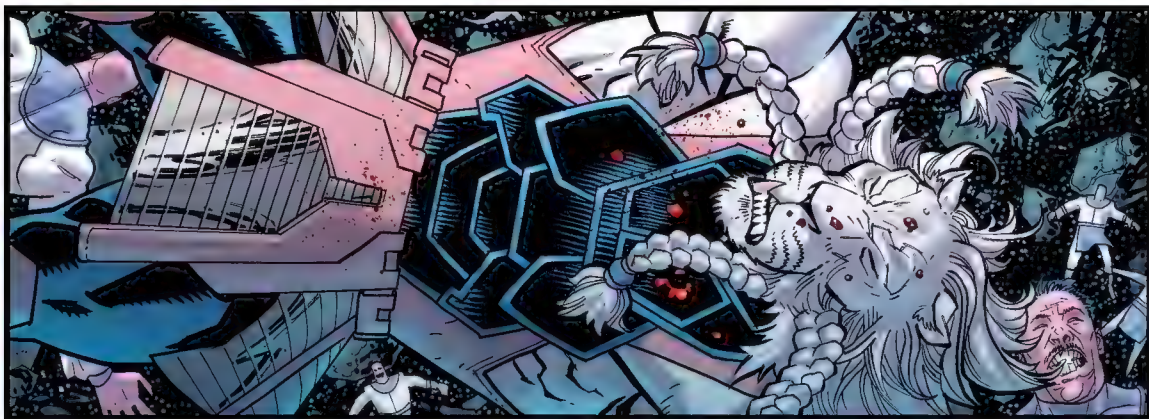






...BUT
REVENGE!







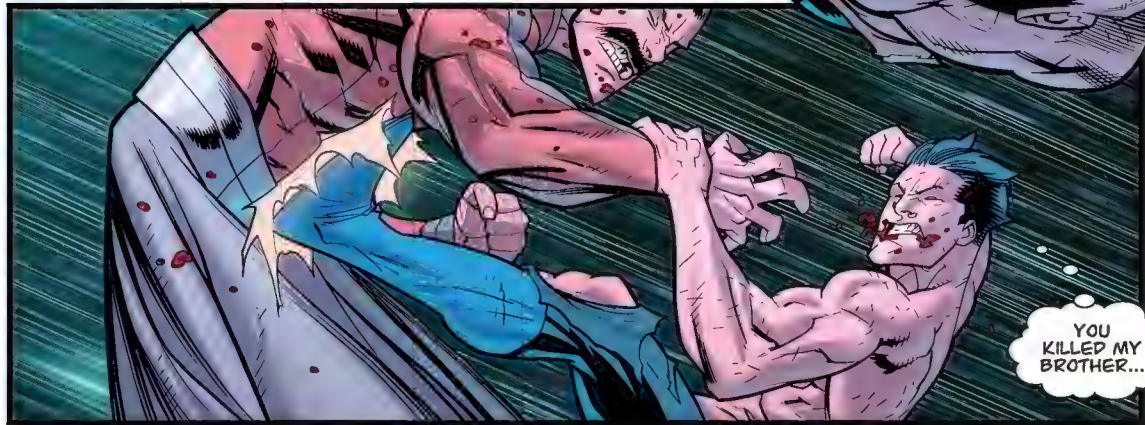
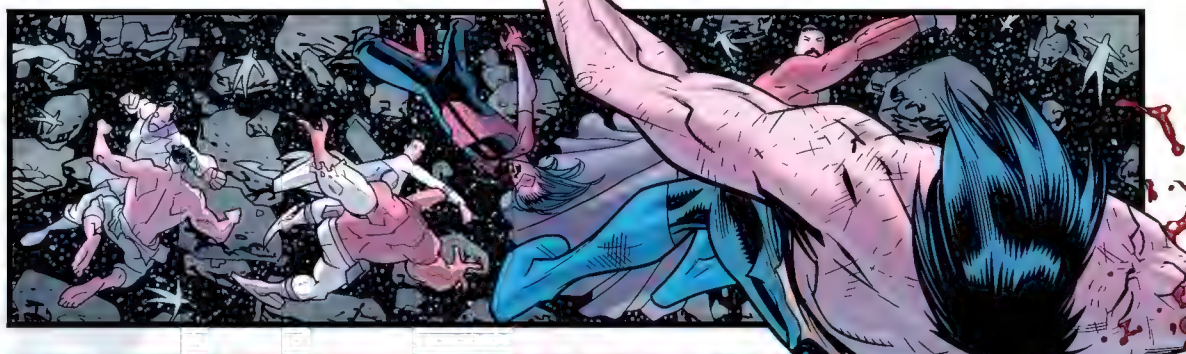
YOU
ARE ALL
NEXT.

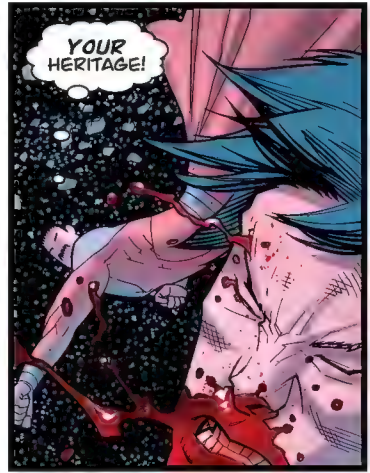
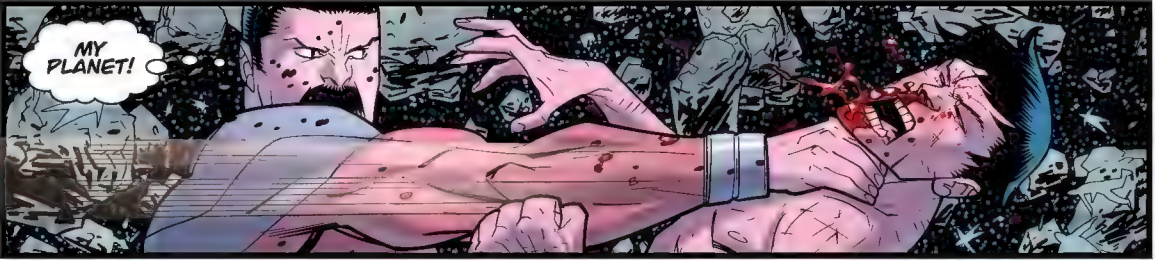
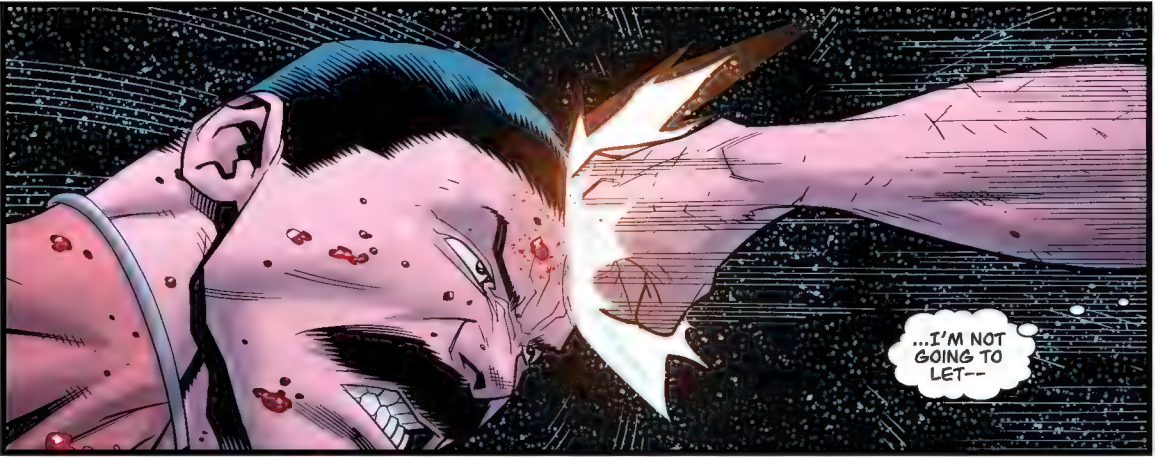


CHAPTER 76



PYAN

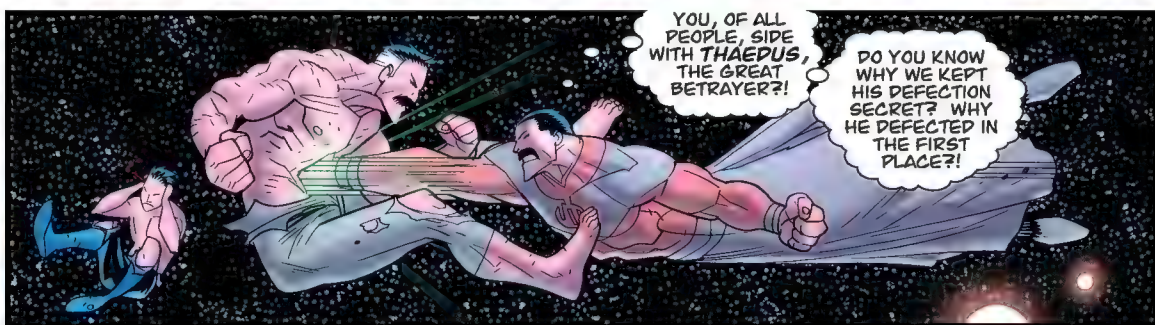






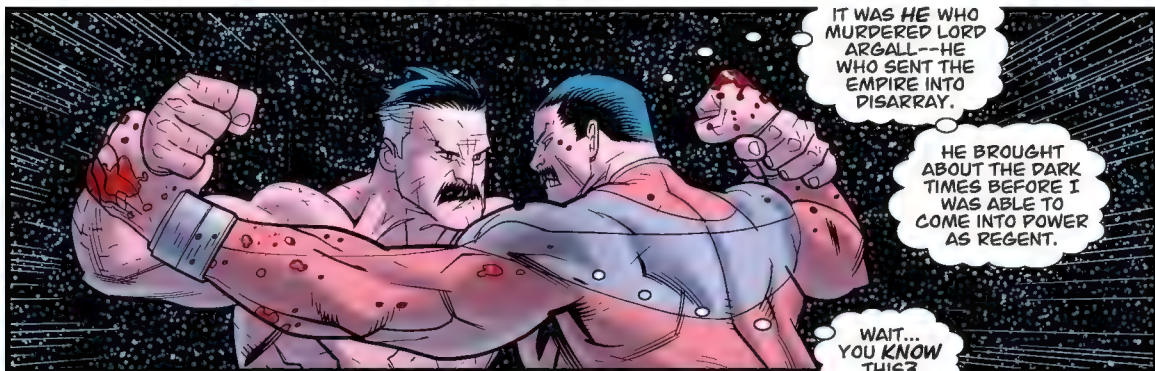
IT'S OVER,
THRAGG! GIVE
IT UP--YOU'VE
LOST, CAN'T
YOU SEE
THAT?

AND
YOU!



YOU, OF ALL
PEOPLE, SIDE
WITH THAEDUS,
THE GREAT
BETRAYER?!

DO YOU KNOW
WHY WE KEPT
HIS DEFECTION
SECRET? WHY
HE DEFECTED IN
THE FIRST
PLACE?!



IT WAS HE WHO
MURDERED LORD
ARGALL--HE
WHO SENT THE
EMPIRE INTO
DISARRAY.

HE BROUGHT
ABOUT THE DARK
TIMES BEFORE I
WAS ABLE TO
COME INTO POWER
AS REGENT.

WAIT...
YOU KNOW
THIS?



WE ALSO BELIEVE
HE WAS BEHIND
THE SCOURGE
VIRUS--WHICH
STOLE ANY HOPE
OF FINDING A
TRUE HEIR TO
ARGALL.

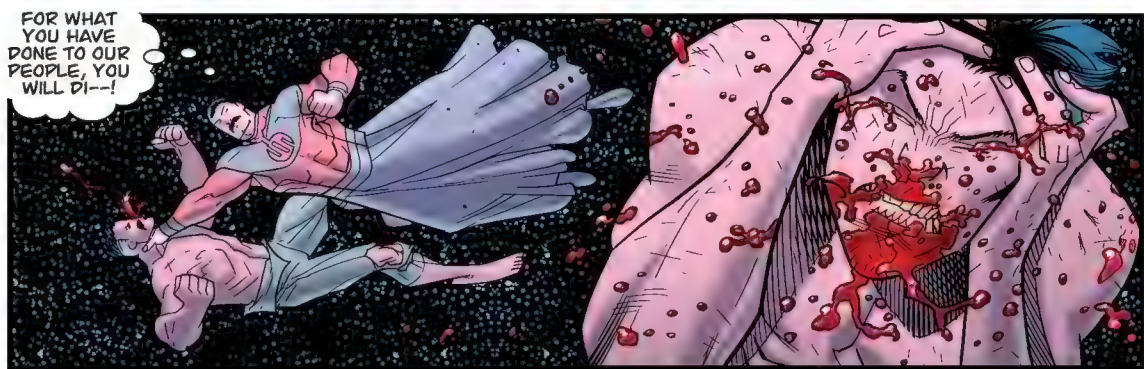
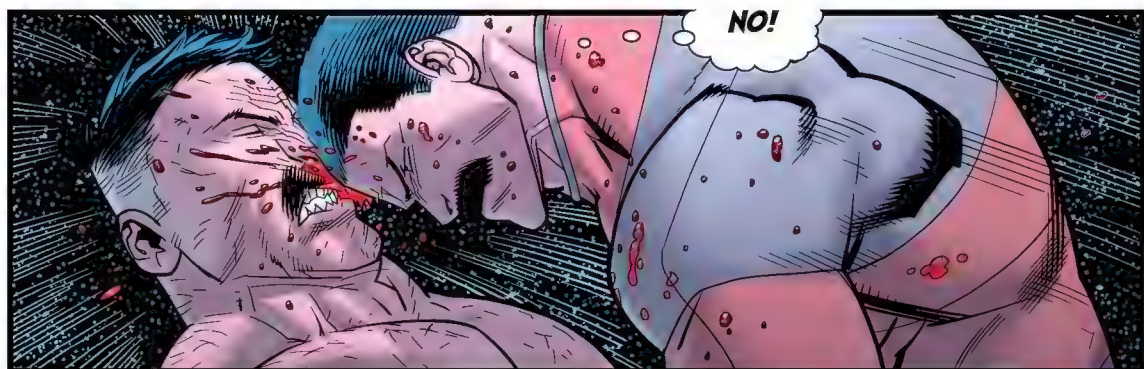
HE MUST
HAVE USED HIS
OWN DNA FOR
THEM TO DEVELOP
IT--IT'S THE
ONLY WAY.

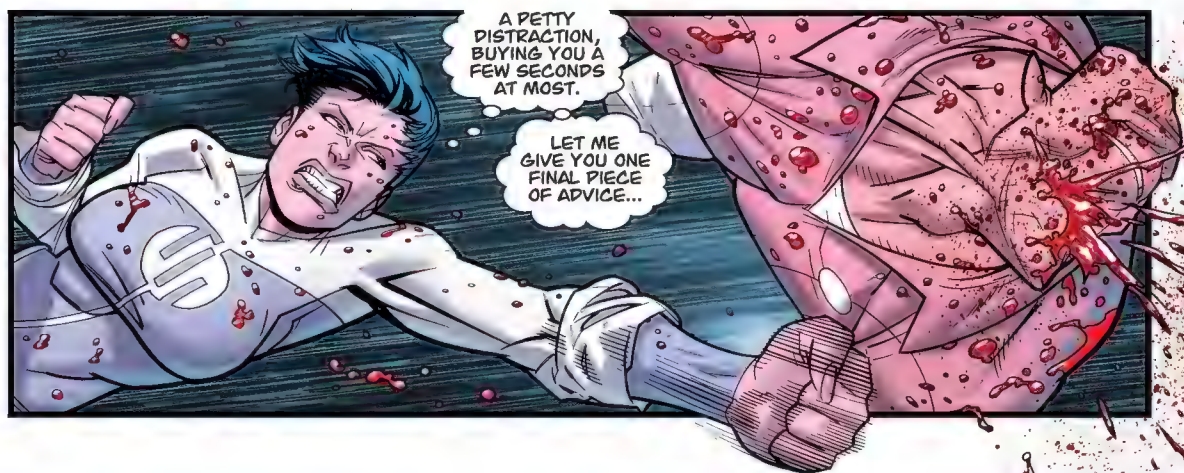
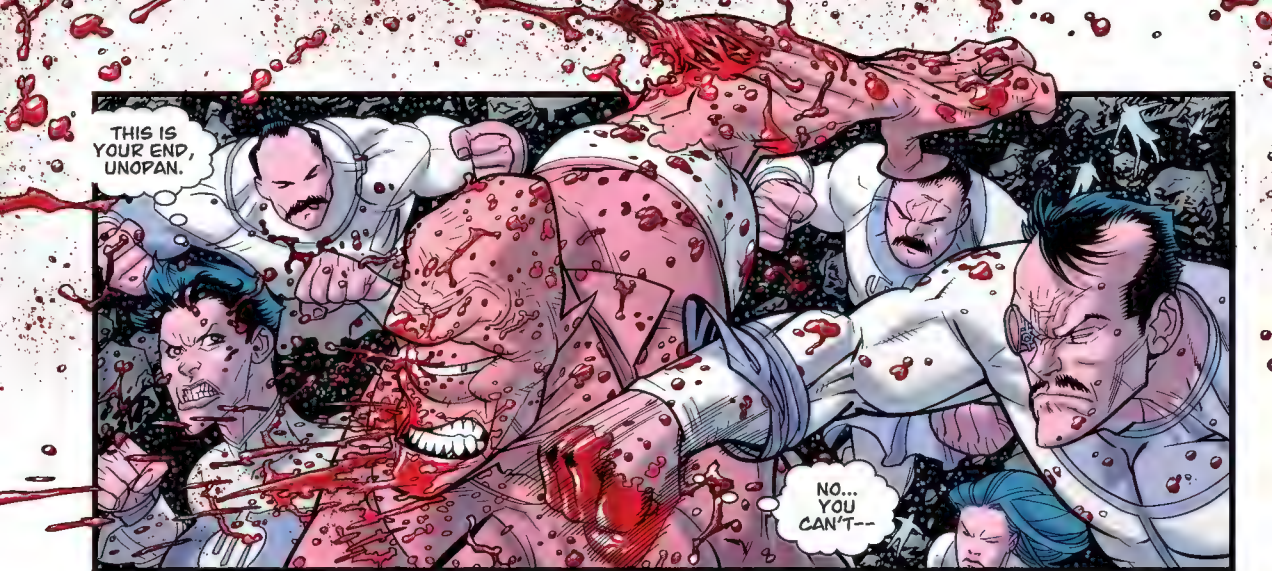


I--

I AM NOT
THE MAN I
ONCE WAS. I
FEEL OUR PEOPLE
DESERVE NOTHING
LESS THAN
EXTINCTION FOR
WHAT WE'VE
DONE...

NO
MATTER
HOW IT PAINS
ME TO SAY
SUCH A
THING.





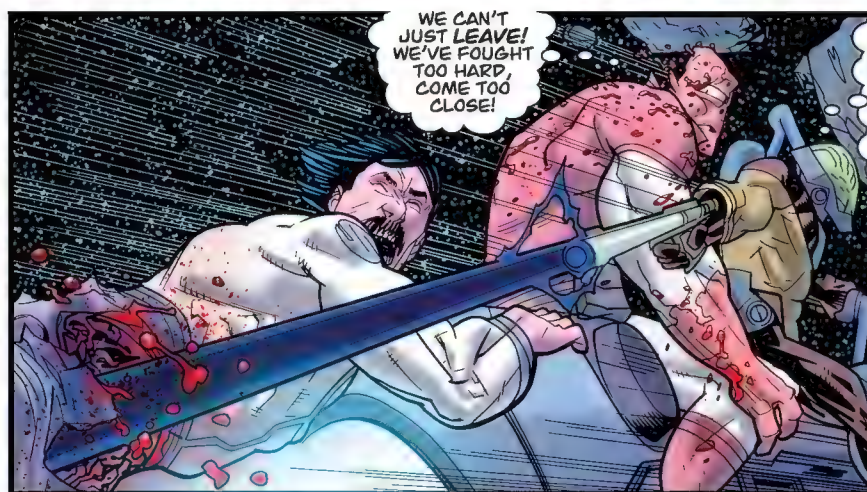


WHAT?!



WE
ARE OUT
OF HERE,
FRIEND!

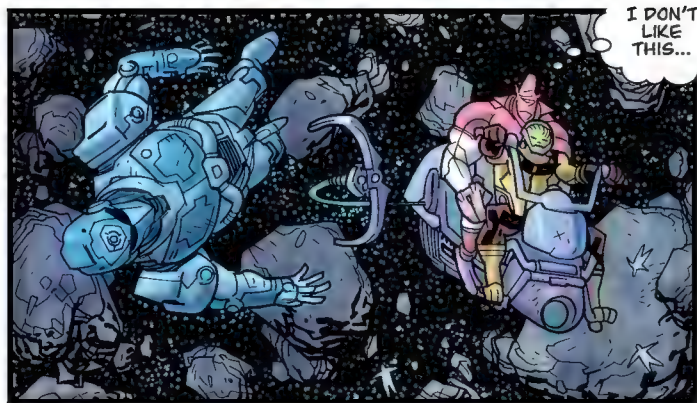
SPACE
RACER,
WHAT ARE
YOU--?



WE CAN'T
JUST LEAVE!
WE'VE FOUGHT
TOO HARD,
COME TOO
CLOSE!

HAVE YOU BEEN PAYING
ATTENTION? THE
DESTRUCTION OF VILTRUM
WAS LUCK AND IT KNOCKED
THEM OFF BALANCE--BUT
LOOK AT YOU. WE'RE OUT-
NUMBERED. THIS WAS NEVER
MEANT TO BE A FULL-ON
ASSAULT. WE WERE MEANT
TO POSITION OURSELVES ON
VILTRUM AND WAIT FOR
MY ARRIVAL WITH THE
RAGNAR... THIS HAS
BEEN A DISASTER.

WE LEAVE
NOW OR
WE'RE ALL
DEAD!

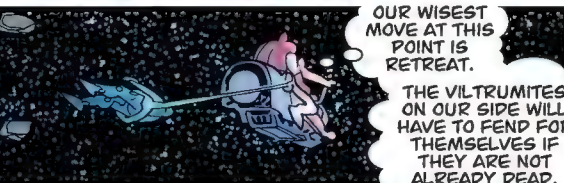
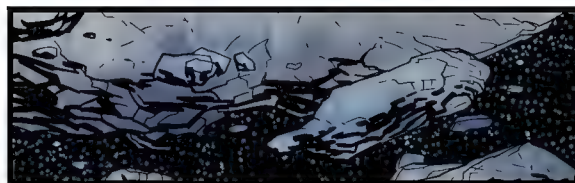


I DON'T
LIKE
THIS...



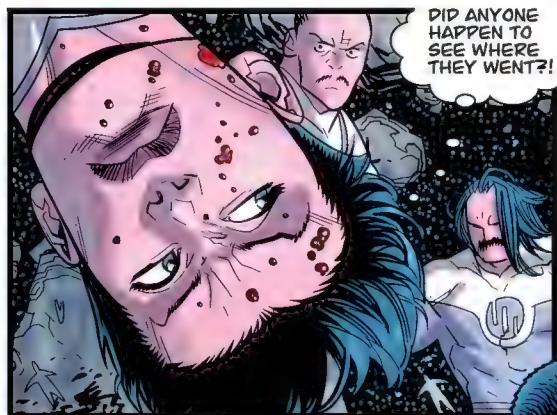
WHAT
ABOUT
NOLAN AND
MARK?

WE
CANNOT
HELP THEM
NOW. WE
MUST
CALL FOR
HELP.

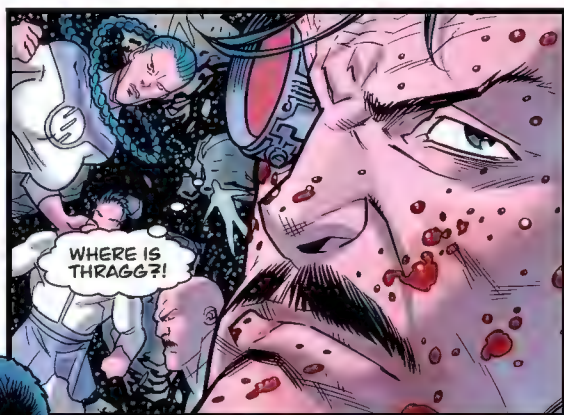


OUR WISEST
MOVE AT THIS
POINT IS
RETREAT.

THE VILTRUMITES
ON OUR SIDE WILL
HAVE TO FEND FOR
THEMSELVES IF
THEY ARE NOT
ALREADY DEAD.



DID ANYONE
HAPPEN TO
SEE WHERE
THEY WENT?!

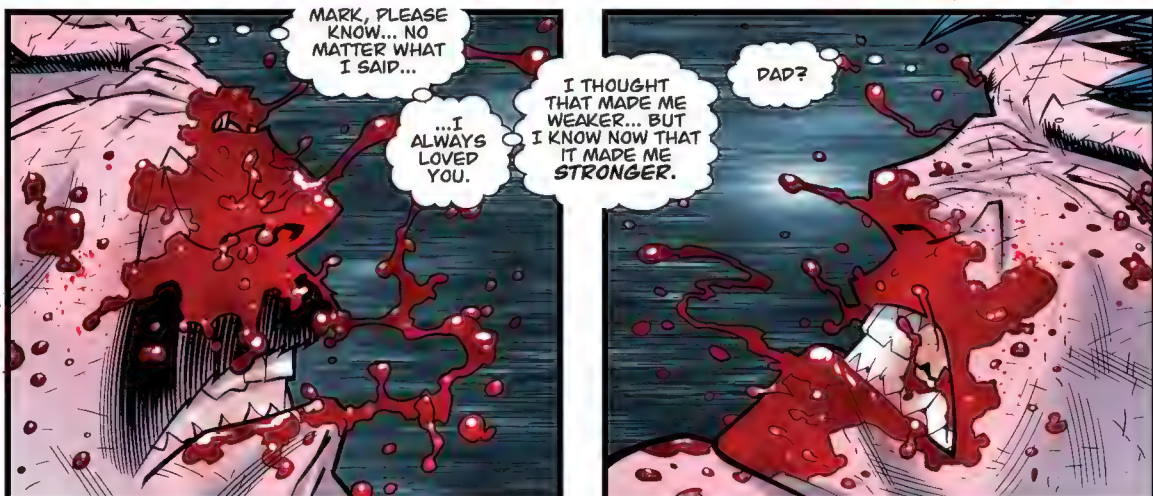
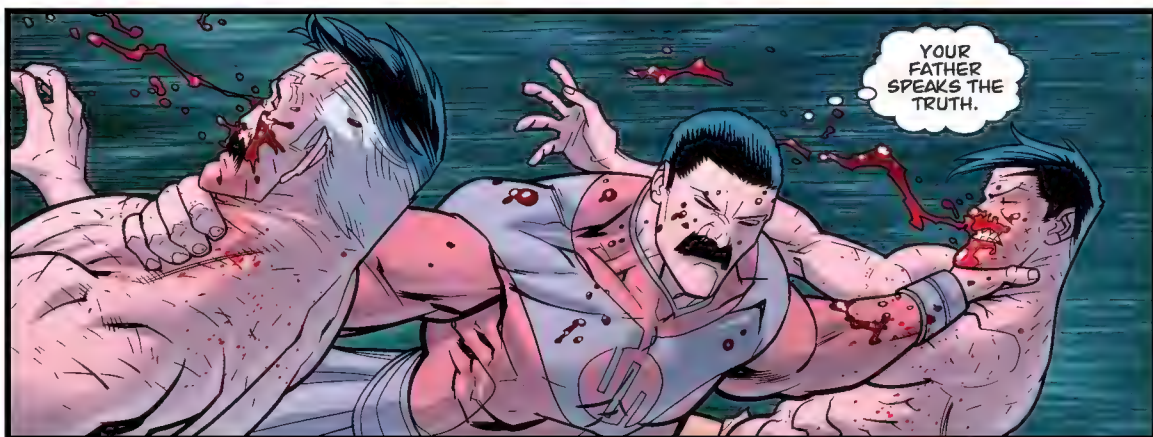
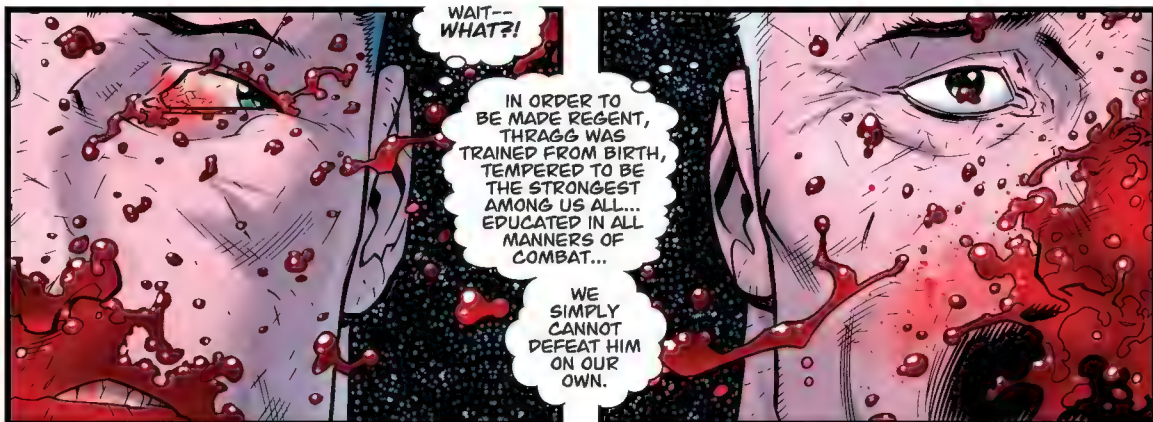


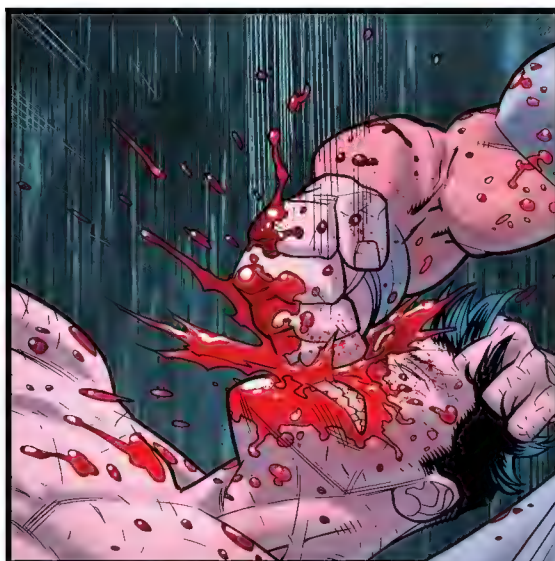
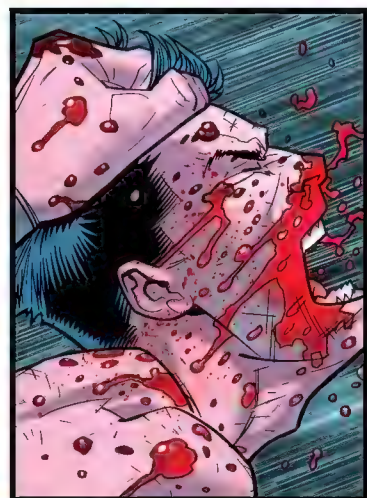
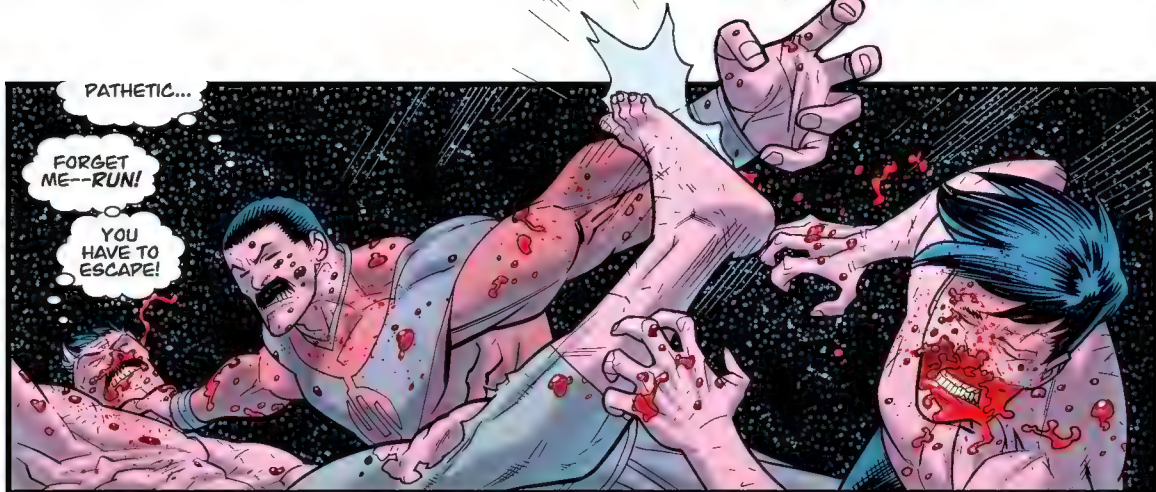
WHERE IS
THRAGG?!

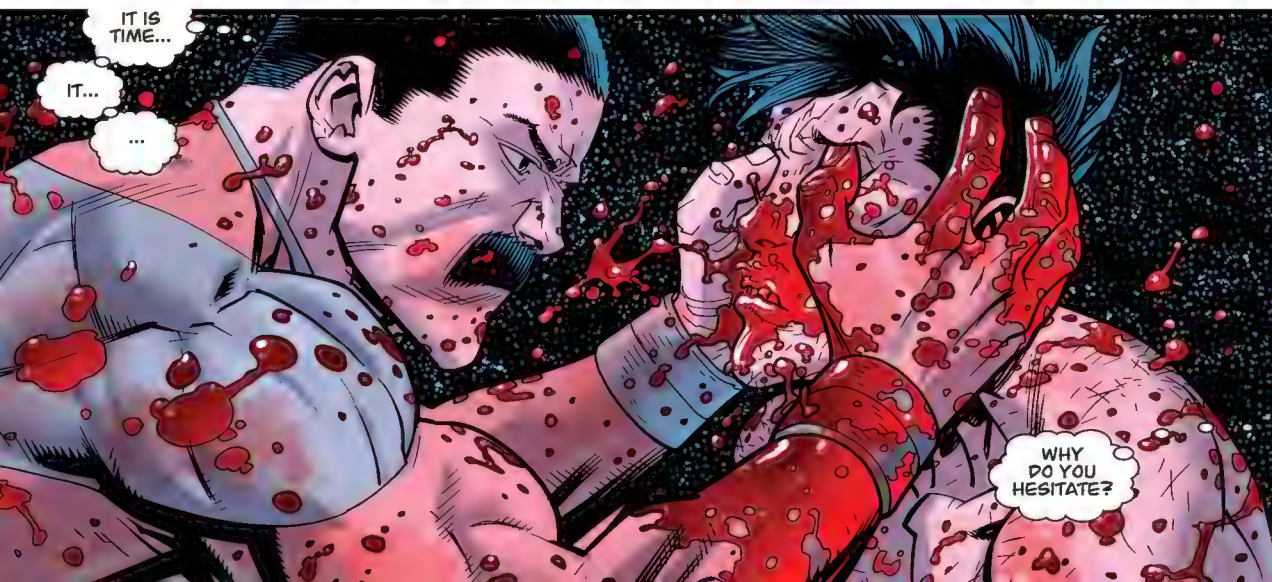
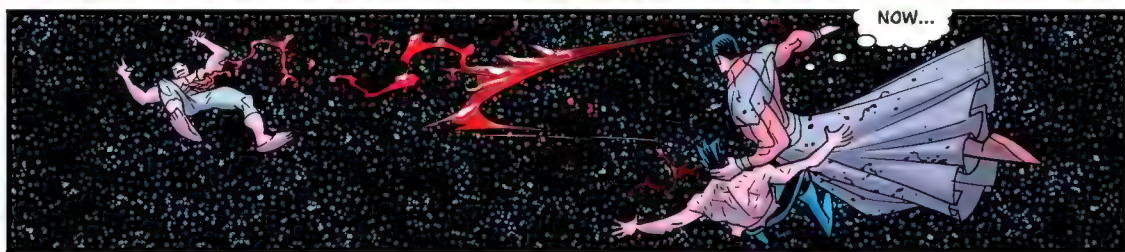
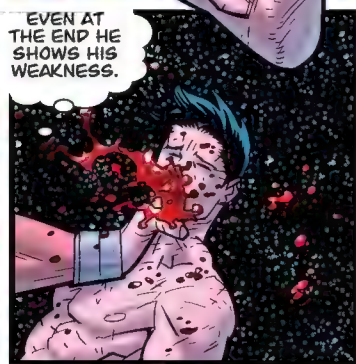


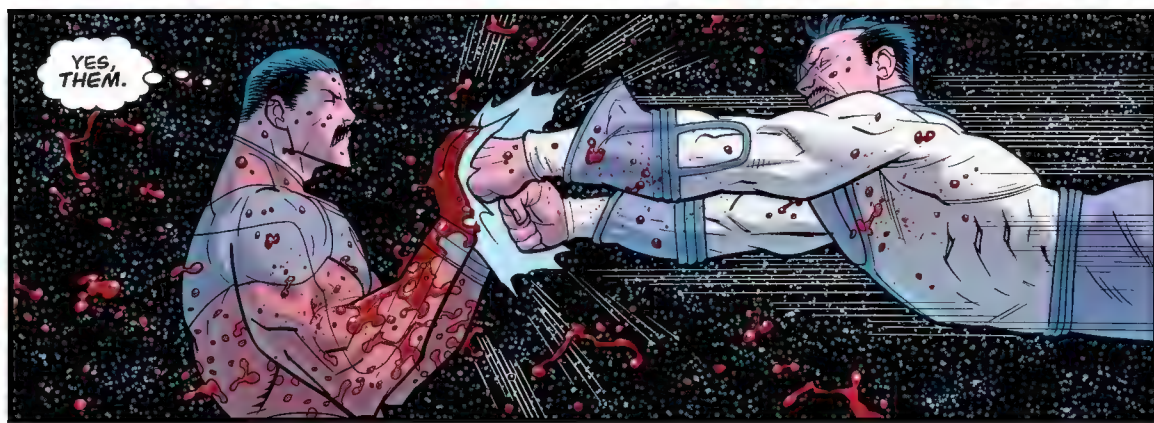
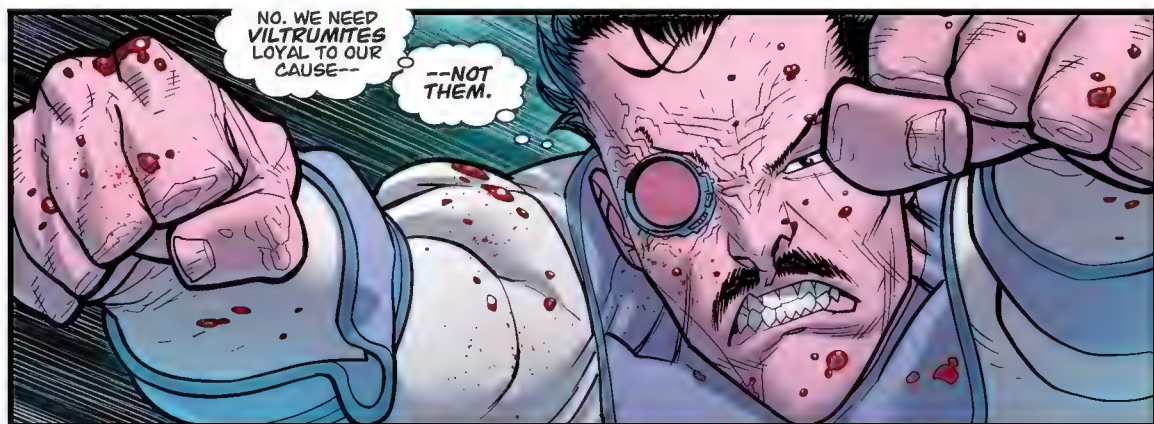
OKAY
THEN...

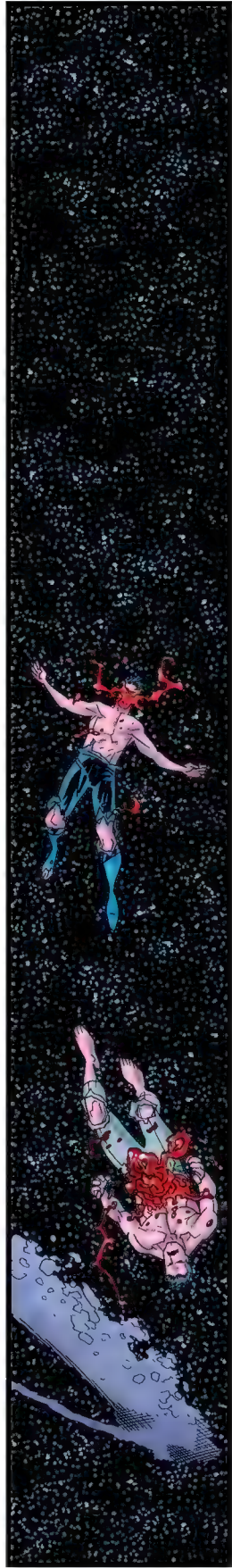
WHERE
WERE
WE?

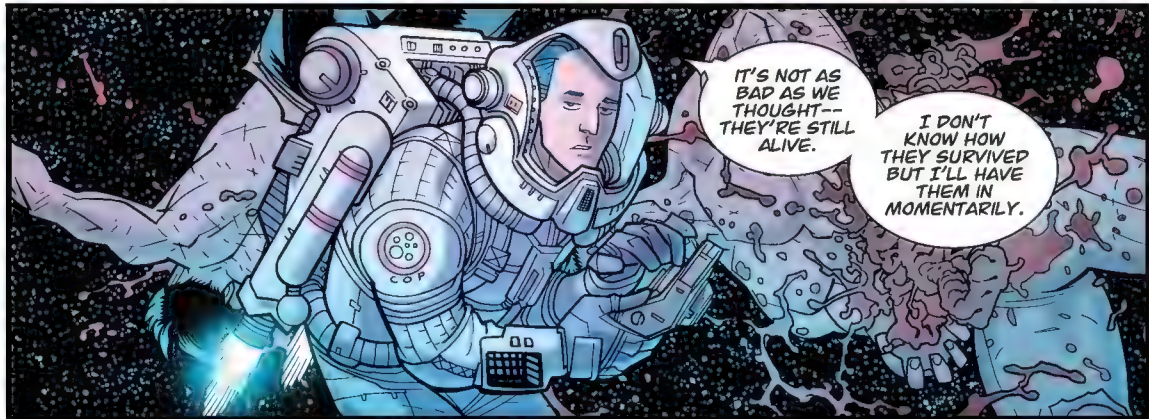














THEY TOLD
ME YOU WERE
WAKING UP.
I'M GLAD I
MADE IT HERE
IN TIME.

IT'S SO
GOOD TO SEE
YOU, MARK. I
WAS WORRIED
THERE AT THE
BEGINNING.

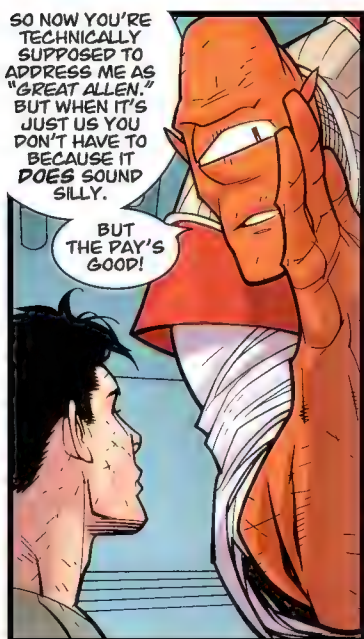




TWO WEEKS, YOU WERE PRETTY MESSED UP. AS FOR THE CLOTHES... I'VE BEEN BUMPED UP TO THE TOP POSITION. I'M THE BOSS.

WITH THAEDUS GONE, THE COALITION OF PLANETS WAS IN DISARRAY, AND THEY FEARED THIS WAR WAS FAR FROM OVER.

I WAS HASTILY CHRISTENED TOP DOG OF THE COALITION.



SO NOW YOU'RE TECHNICALLY SUPPOSED TO ADDRESS ME AS "GREAT ALLEN." BUT WHEN IT'S JUST US YOU DON'T HAVE TO BECAUSE IT DOES SOUND SILLY.

BUT THE PAY'S GOOD!



WELL, UH...

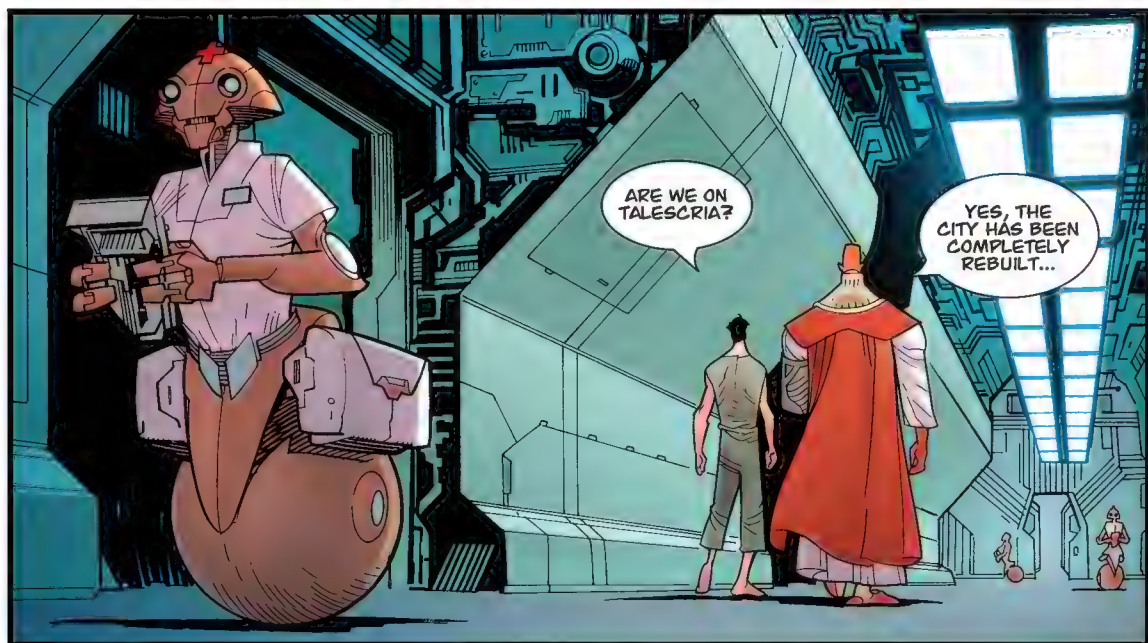
CONGRATS.

IS MY FATHER AROUND? I ASSUME HE WOKE UP BEFORE I DID.



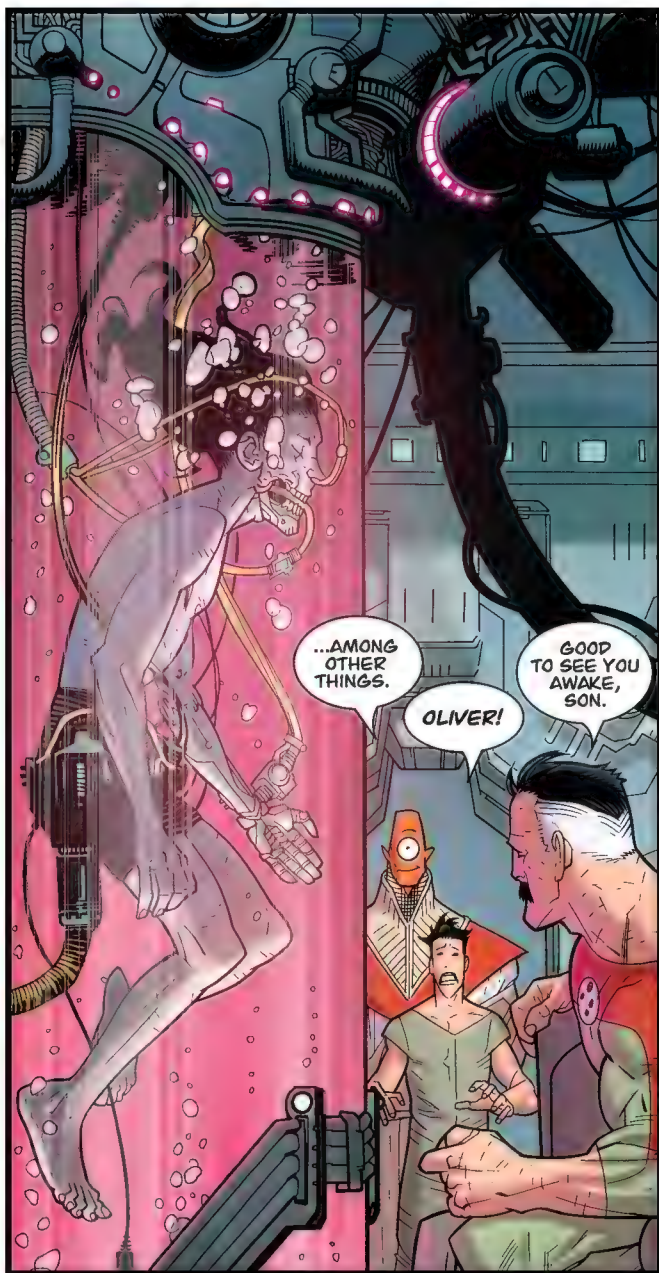
HE DID... BY A FEW DAYS.

THIS WAY.



ARE WE ON TALESERIA?

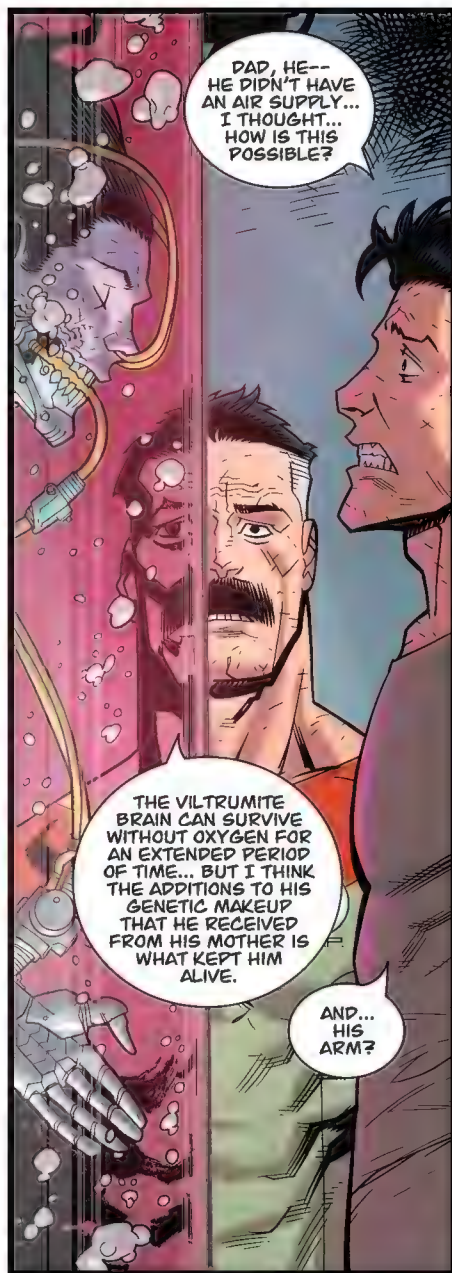
YES, THE CITY HAS BEEN COMPLETELY REBUILT...



...AMONG
OTHER
THINGS.

OLIVER!

GOOD
TO SEE YOU
AWAKE,
SON.



DAD, HE--
HE DIDN'T HAVE
AN AIR SUPPLY...
I THOUGHT...
HOW IS THIS
POSSIBLE?

THE VILTRUMITE
BRAIN CAN SURVIVE
WITHOUT OXYGEN FOR
AN EXTENDED PERIOD
OF TIME... BUT I THINK
THE ADDITIONS TO HIS
GENETIC MAKEUP
THAT HE RECEIVED
FROM HIS MOTHER IS
WHAT KEPT HIM
ALIVE.

AND...
HIS
ARM?



THE SOLUTION
HE'S SUSPENDED
IN IS ENHANCING
HIS NATURAL
REGENERATIVE
ABILITIES.

HIS OWN
SKIN IS BEING
GROWN OVER
PROSTHETIC
REPLACEMENTS
FOR HIS ARM
AND LOWER
JAW.

HIS BRAIN
SCANS ARE
REMARKABLE. IF HIS
HEALING KEEPS UP AT
THIS PACE, HE SHOULD
BE OUT OF THE TUBE IN
ANOTHER WEEK, READY
TO BEGIN HIS PHYSICAL
REHABILITATION.

HE WON'T BE BACK UP
TO FULL
POWER ANY
TIME SOON...
BUT HE'S
ALIVE.

HE'S
ALIVE.





GRANTED, SPACE IS A BIG PLACE, AND THEY CAN CERTAINLY TRAVEL GREAT DISTANCES IN LITTLE TIME... BUT WE'VE GOT EYES IN ALL QUADRANTS OF THE GALAXY.

IT WOULD BE VERY HARD TO HIDE FROM US.

WE'VE SEARCHED ALL THE FORMER PLANETS OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE TO SEE IF SOMEONE MIGHT POSSIBLY BE HARBORING THEM. **THEY'RE NOT.**

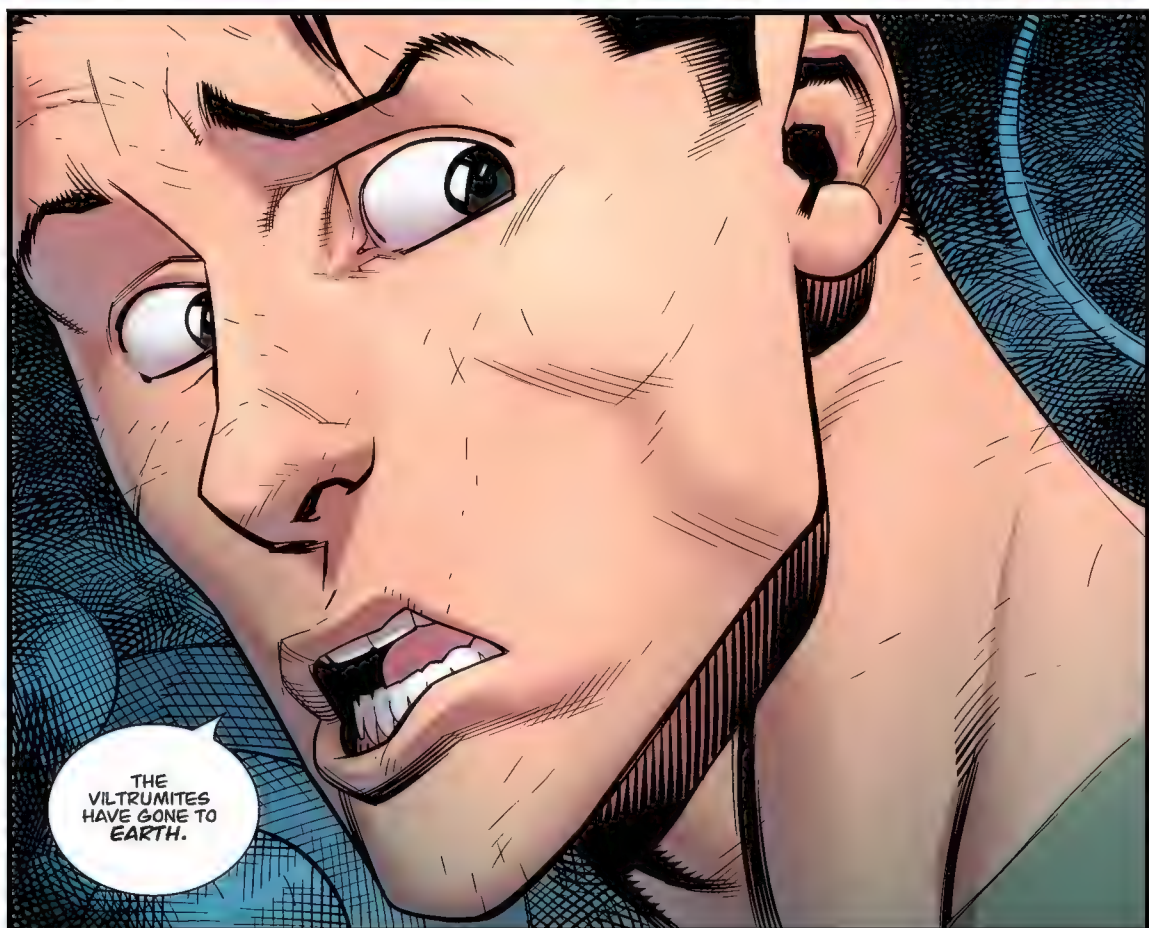
WITHOUT THOSE PLANETS TO BACK THEM, THEIR NUMBERS DWINDLE TO THE POINT THAT ANY FRONTAL ASSAULT AGAINST US WOULD BE INEFFECTIVE AT BEST, **DISASTROUS** AT WORST.

SO IT MAKES SENSE THAT THEY WOULD LAY LOW FOR A WHILE, REGROUP, PREPARE FOR A SERIES OF SMALL, CALCULATED ASSAULTS.

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM WOULD HAVE THEM ATTACKING THEIR FORMERLY OCCUPIED PLANETS, IT WOULD TAKE LITTLE EFFORT TO TURN THEM BACK TO THEIR SIDE... AND EVENTUALLY THEY WOULD AGAIN COMMAND A FORCE LARGE ENOUGH TO DESTROY US.

WE'VE BEEN STATIONING OUR TROOPS WITH THESE PLANETS IN PREPARATION FOR THIS. A DELAY OF THIS LONG, ESPECIALLY WITH THEM KNOWING YOU AND YOUR FATHER AND BROTHER WERE OUT OF COMMISSION FOLLOWING OUR LAST BATTLE... MAKES NO SENSE...

...NO SENSE AT ALL.



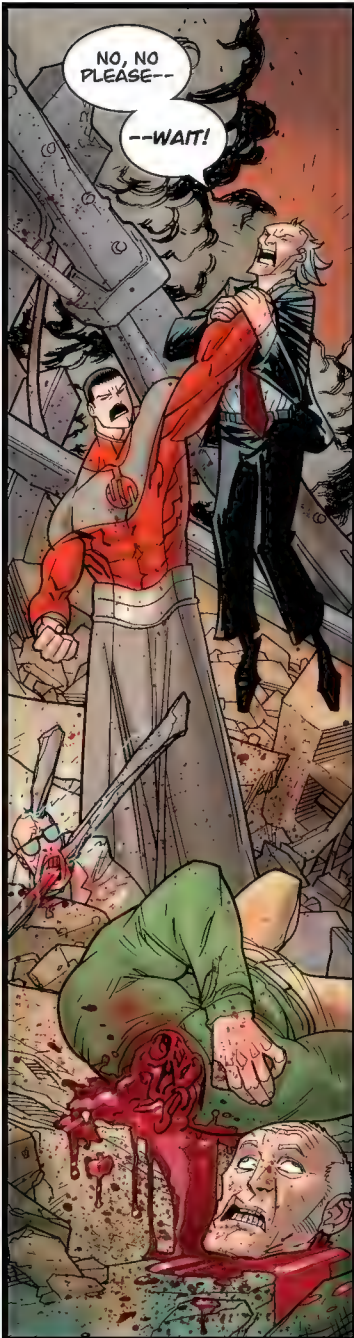
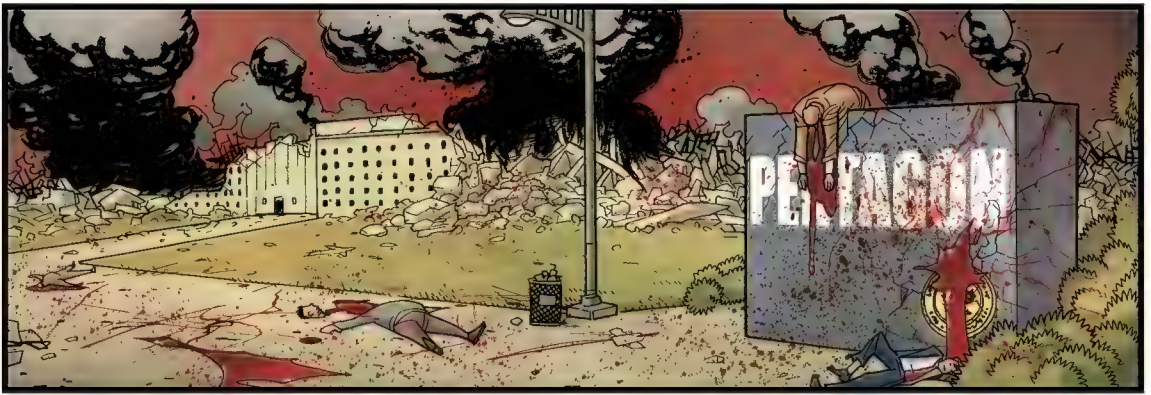


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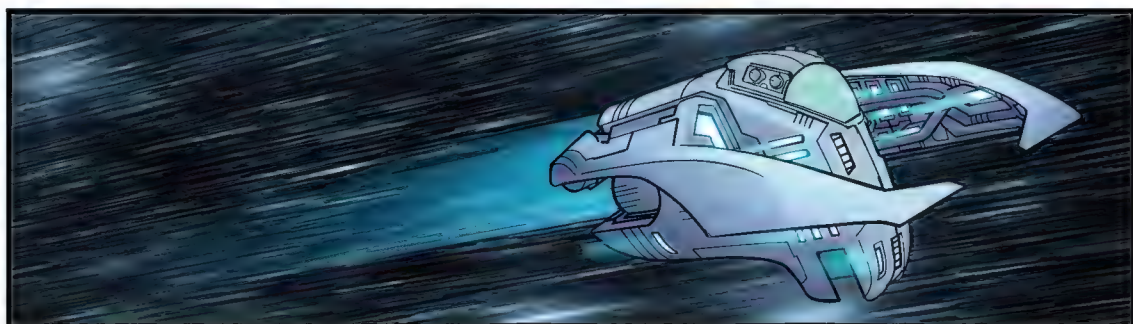


Ryan
Townsend
+ico









TALESCRIA, HEADQUARTERS OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS.



THE MOVERS WON'T BE HERE FOR AT LEAST TWENTY MINUTES. PLENTY OF TIME IF YOU WANT TO--

TELIA, PLEASE... NOT NOW.



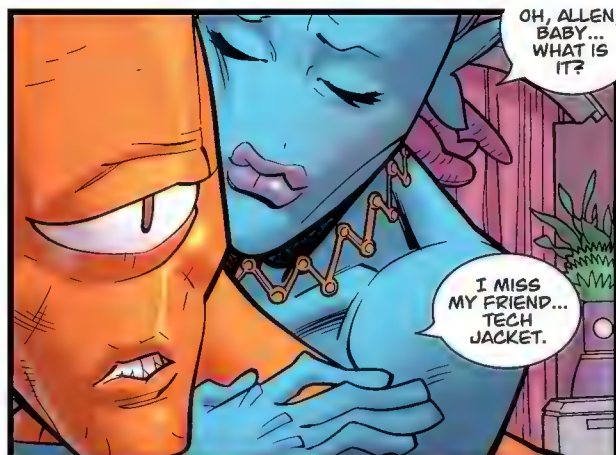
YOUR FRIENDS WILL BE FINE. THOSE VILTRUMITES PROBABLY JUST WENT INTO HIDING.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM. I BET WE DON'T HEAR FROM THEM FOR YEARS.

I DO NOT HAVE THE LUXURY OF TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE VILTRUMITES. I COMMAND ALL THE PLANETS IN THE COALITION, NOW... I'VE GOT FAR TOO MUCH TO WORRY ABOUT.

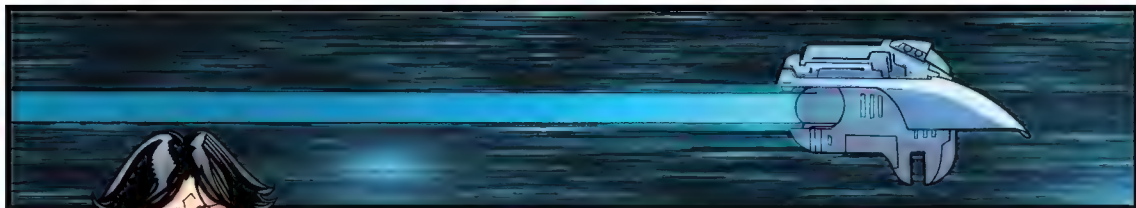
STILL, I CAN'T STAND THAT WE JUST DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY WENT... PART OF ME, I HATE TO ADMIT, WISHES THEY DID GO TO EARTH... AT LEAST THEN, WE'D KNOW.

BUT... THAT'S NOT ALL OF IT...



OH, ALLEN, BABY... WHAT IS IT?

I MISS MY FRIEND... TECH JACKET.



I KNOW I'M NOWHERE NEAR AS STRONG AS YOU GUYS--BUT I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW, WHATEVER WE'RE HEADING INTO, WHATEVER WE'RE UP AGAINST...

I'M TOTALLY THERE FOR YOU.

EARTH IS MY HOME, TOO-- AND I'M GOING TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO TAKE OUT AS MANY VILTRUMITES AS I CAN.

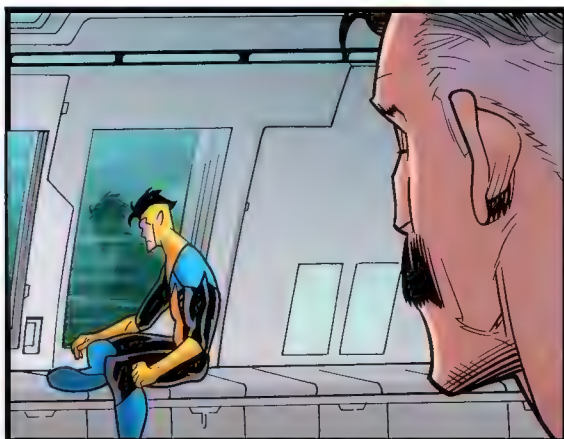
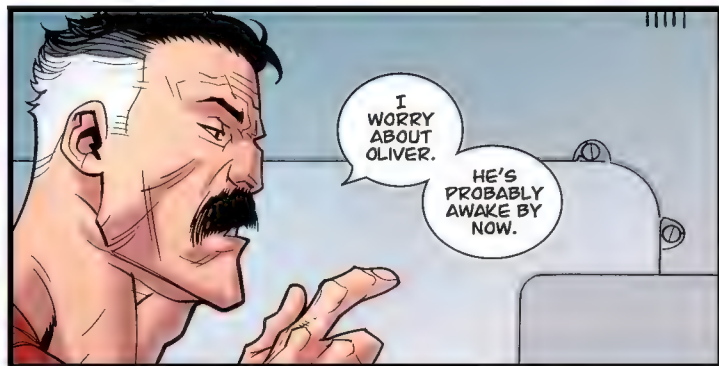
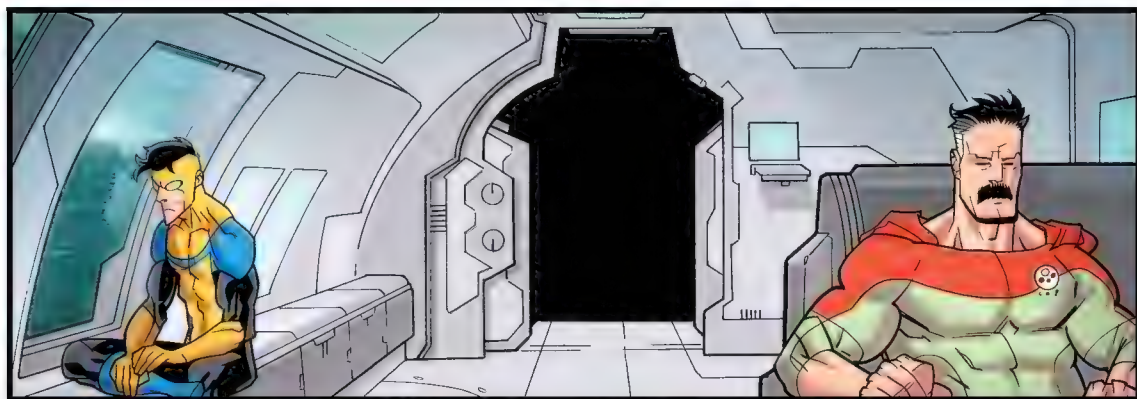
ALLEN LET ME KEEP A LOT OF THE WEAPONS THEY ARMED ME WITH THAT WERE MADE FROM THE THINGS YOU'D WRITTEN ABOUT IN YOUR BOOKS, NOLAN--AND I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HOW I'LL BEST USE THEM TO STAY IN THE FIGHT AND KEEP THEM FROM GETTING NEAR ME.

I CAN ASSURE YOU, I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO--

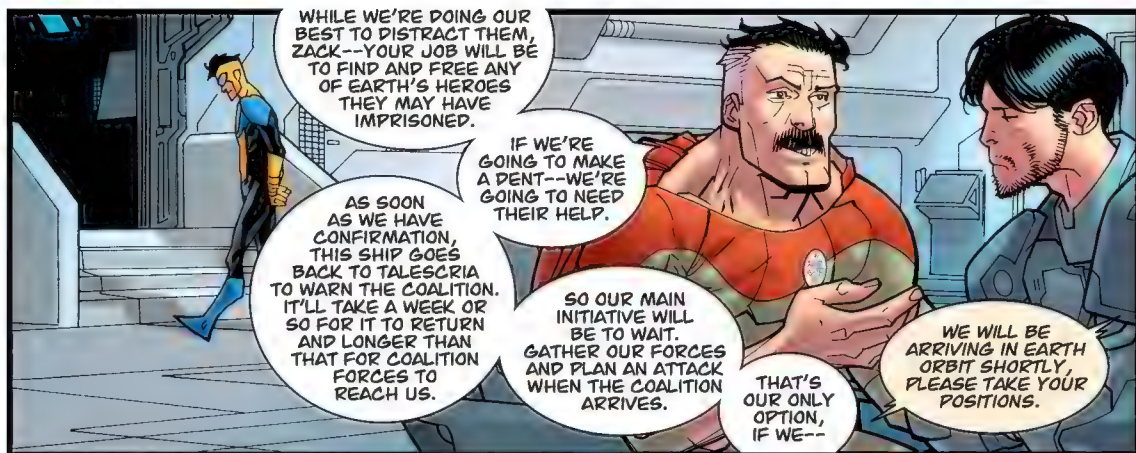
--HELP SAVE EARTH FROM THOSE DUDES...

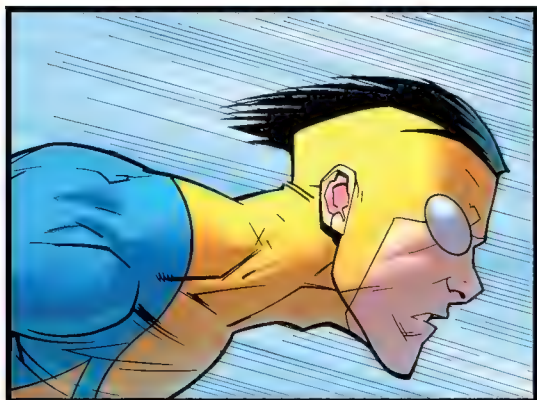
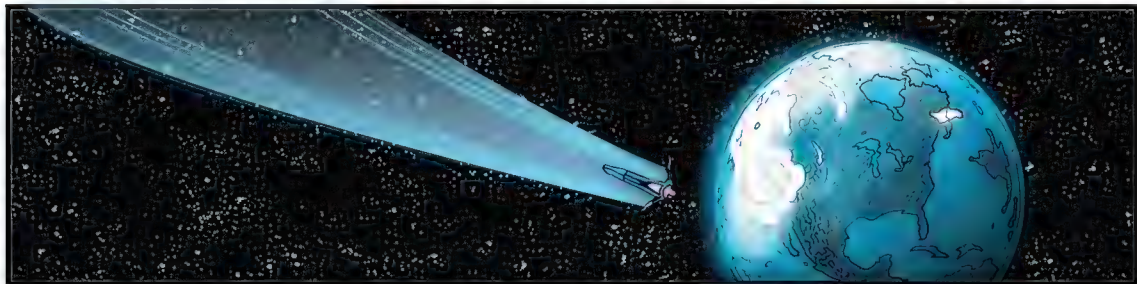
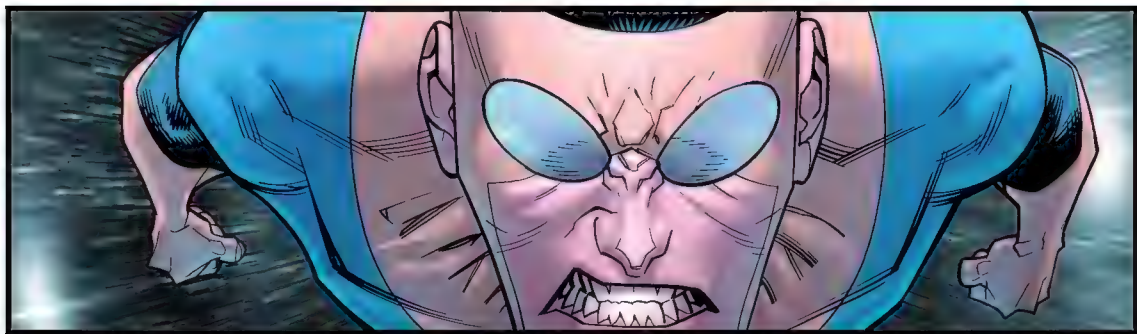
...AND THEN I'M GOING TO MAKE SWEET LOVE TO YOUR FACES IN CELEBRATION.

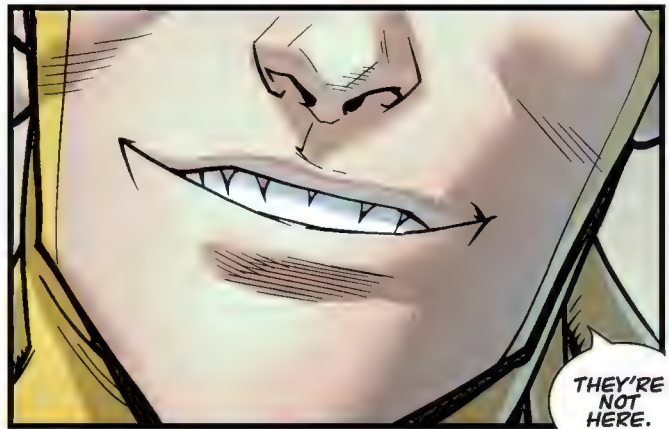
YOU GUYS SUCK.





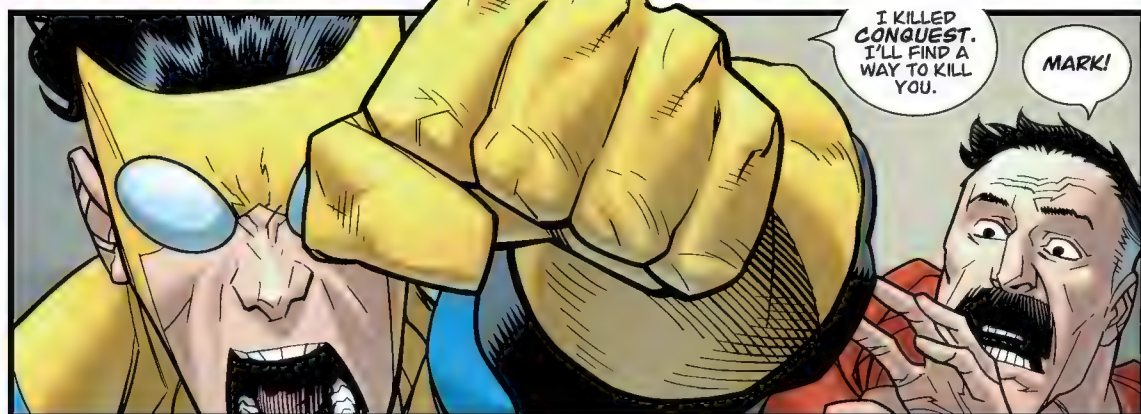






WE VERY
MUCH ARE
HERE.





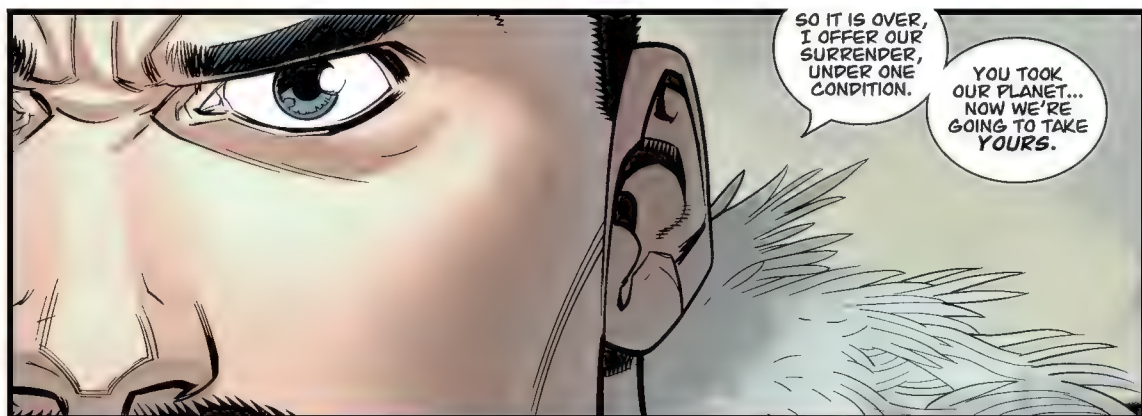




BUT I WAS NOT
MADE GRAND
REGENT OF
THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE FOR
REVENGE.

I WAS
MADE TO RULE
IN ORDER TO
ENSURE THE
SURVIVAL OF
OUR PEOPLE...
AND I HAVE
LEARNED...

...THIS
IS NOT A
WAR
WE CAN
SURVIVE.



SO IT IS OVER,
I OFFER OUR
SURRENDER,
UNDER ONE
CONDITION.

YOU TOOK
OUR PLANET...
NOW WE'RE
GOING TO TAKE
YOURS.



WHAT?!



WE ARE
ALREADY
HERE.

WE DO
NOT WISH
TO LEAVE.



ARE YOU
INSANE? I'LL
NEVER--

BEFORE
YOU OVERREACT,
TAKE NOTICE OF
THE FACT THAT
YOU COULDN'T
MAKE US LEAVE IF
YOU WANTED
TO.

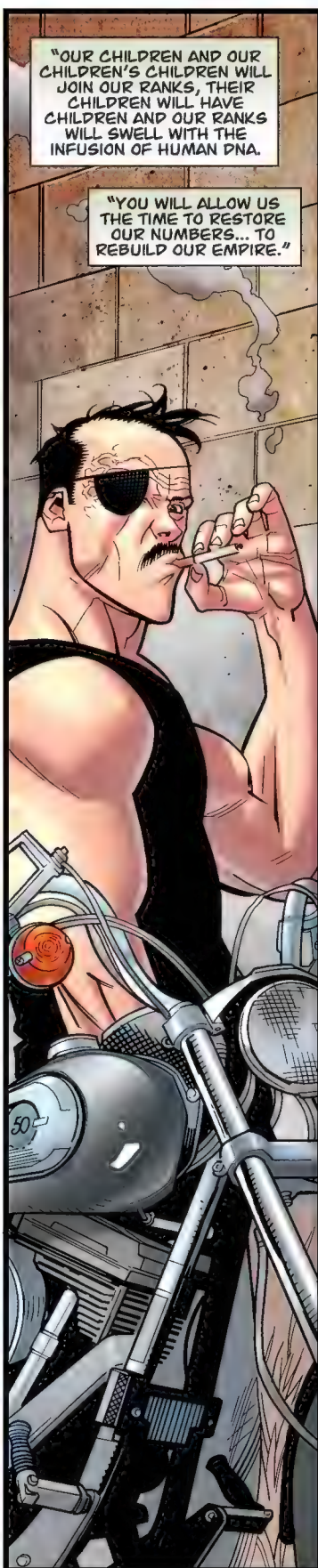
WHAT I
PROPOSE
IS THIS...





THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF THE VILTRUMITE PEOPLE.

WE WILL RESTORE OUR RANKS OVER THE COURSE OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS. HUMAN DNA HAS BEEN PROVEN TO MAKE NEAR PERFECT HYBRIDS... THE CLOSEST THING WE HAVE TO PURE-BLOODED VILTRUMITES.



"OUR CHILDREN AND OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN WILL JOIN OUR RANKS, THEIR CHILDREN WILL HAVE CHILDREN AND OUR RANKS WILL SWELL WITH THE INFUSION OF HUMAN DNA.

"YOU WILL ALLOW US THE TIME TO RESTORE OUR NUMBERS... TO REBUILD OUR EMPIRE."



THOUGH THE TWO OF YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR HOME WORLD, YOU WILL PROVIDE US WITH OUR ULTIMATE SALVATION.

THE TWO OF YOU REPRESENT THE FUTURE OF OUR PEOPLE, WHAT WE WILL BECOME-- WHAT WE **MUST** BECOME IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.

THIS IS HOW THINGS MUST BE.

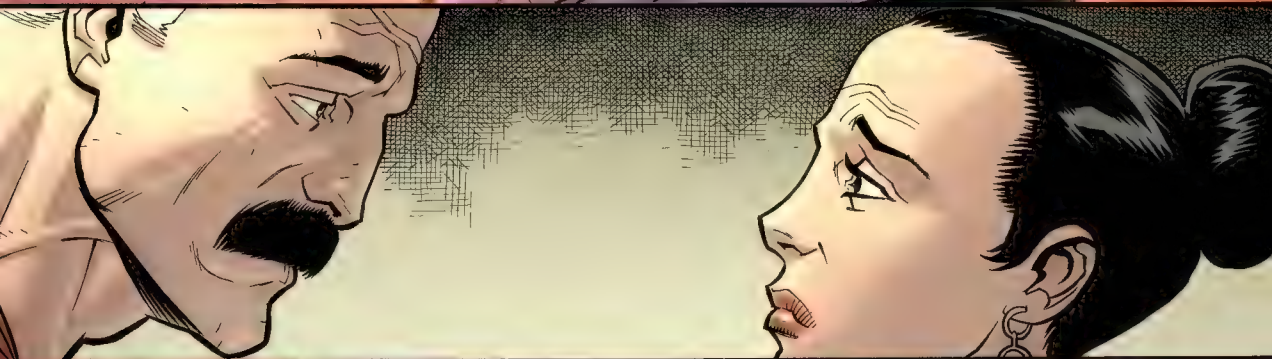








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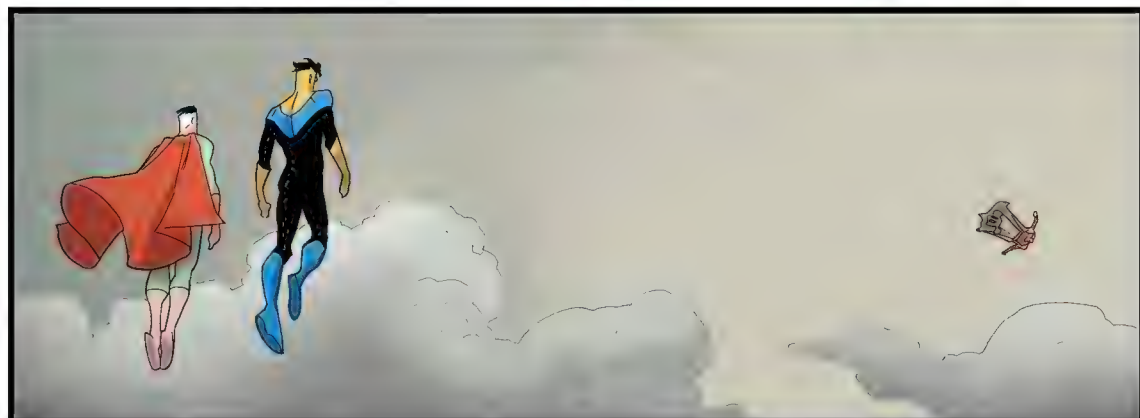


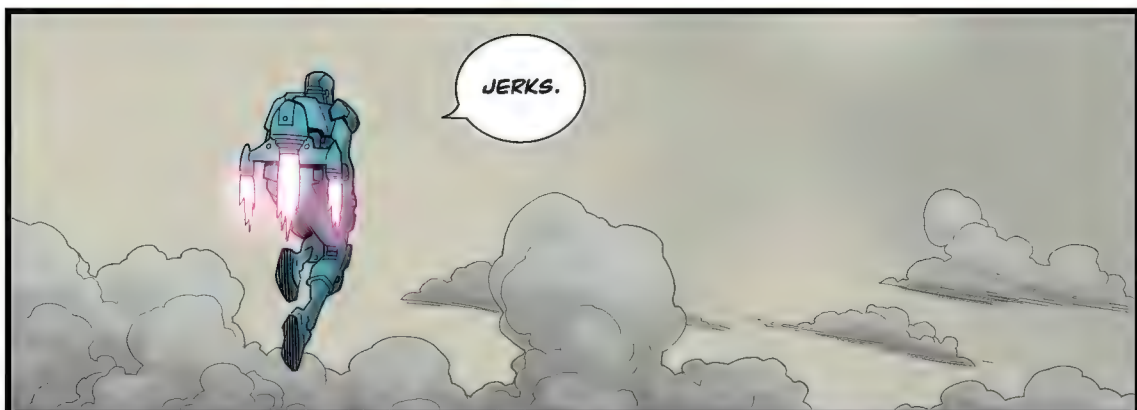
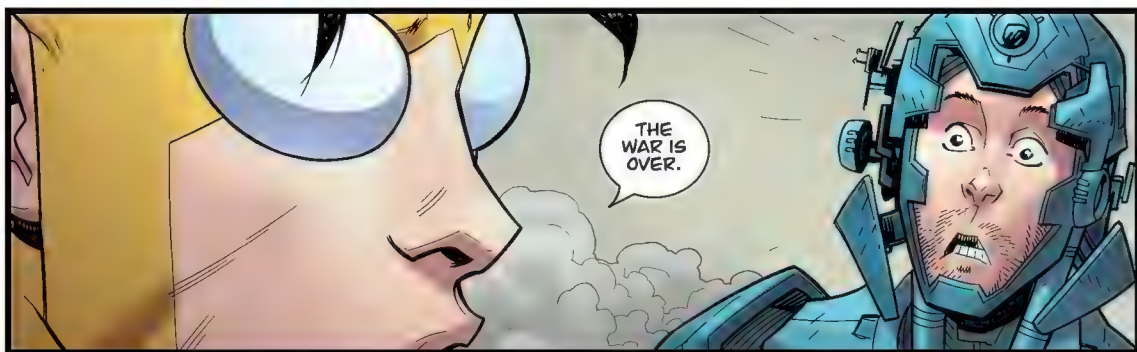
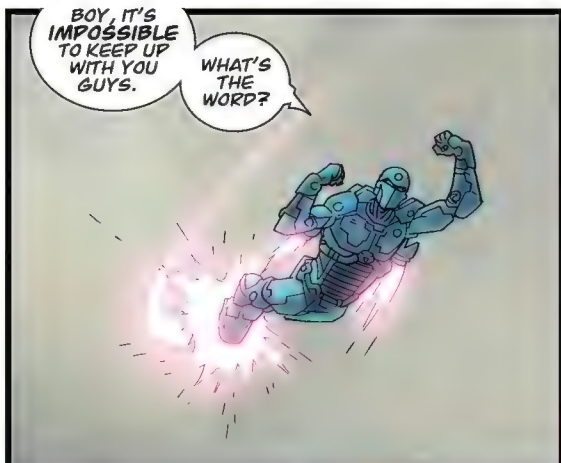
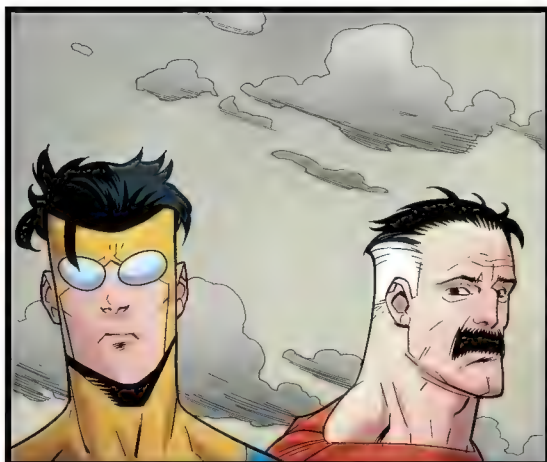
YOU HAVE
CHOSEN
WISELY.

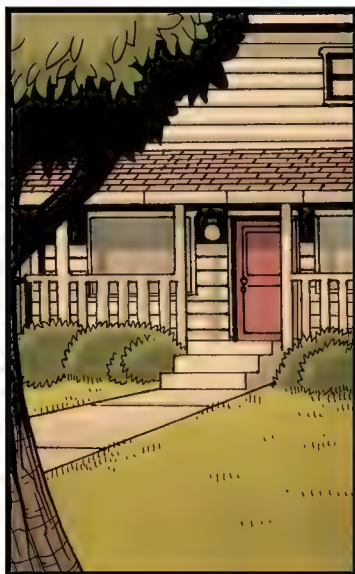
YOU HAVE
MY WORD. WHILE
WE LIVE AMONG
YOU, NO HARM
WILL COME TO YOUR
PEOPLE BY THE
HAND OF ANY
VILTRUMITE.

THE TRUTH
IS, BY ALLOWING
US TO LIVE HERE,
THE TWO OF YOU
MAY VERY WELL
HAVE BECOME
THE SAVIORS
OF OUR
PEOPLE.

IRONIC.

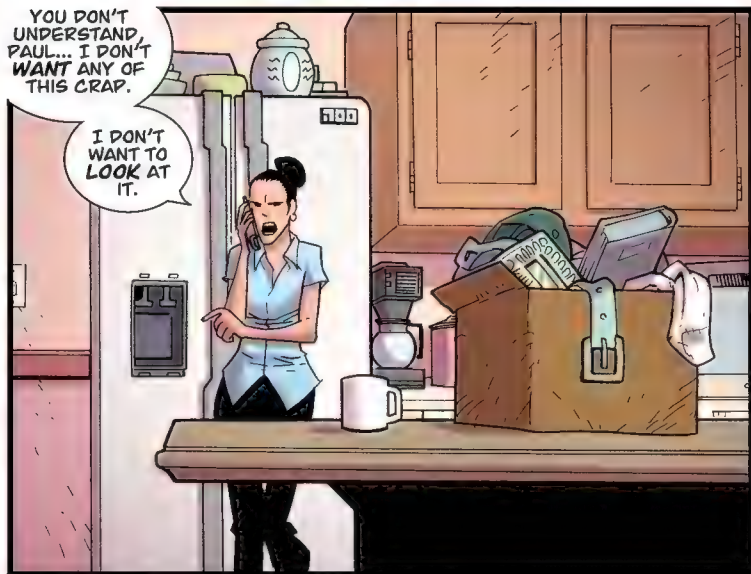






YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, PAUL... I DON'T WANT ANY OF THIS CRAP.

I DON'T WANT TO LOOK AT IT.



THERE ARE TOO MANY MEMORIES ATTACHED. YEAH, GOOD AND BAD ONES.

IT DOES UPSET ME. I CAN ADMIT THAT I MISS YOU A LITTLE BIT. THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THINGS.

THAT'S NOT MY FAULT AND YOU KNOW IT.

NO.

JUST--

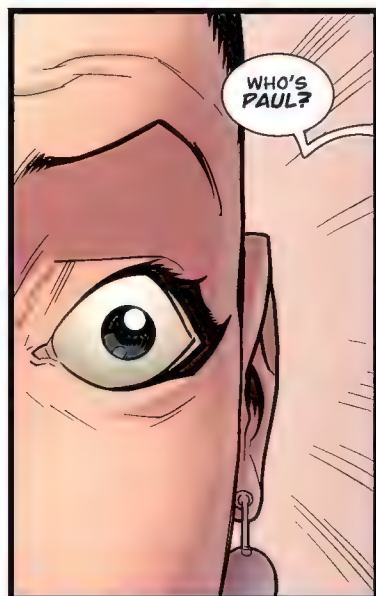
JUST COME OVER TODAY AND GET THIS CRAP OR I'M THROWING IT AWAY.



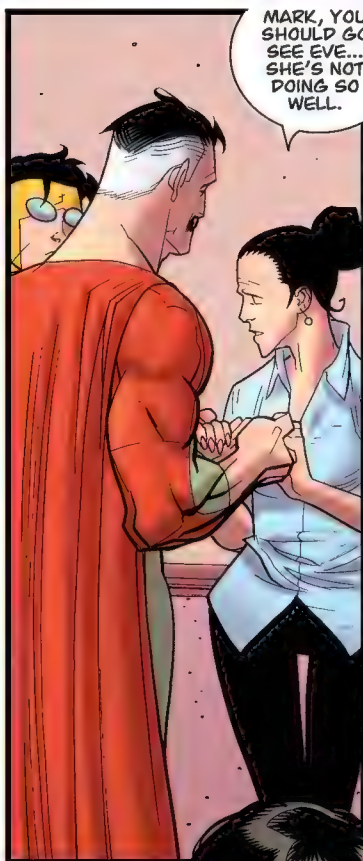
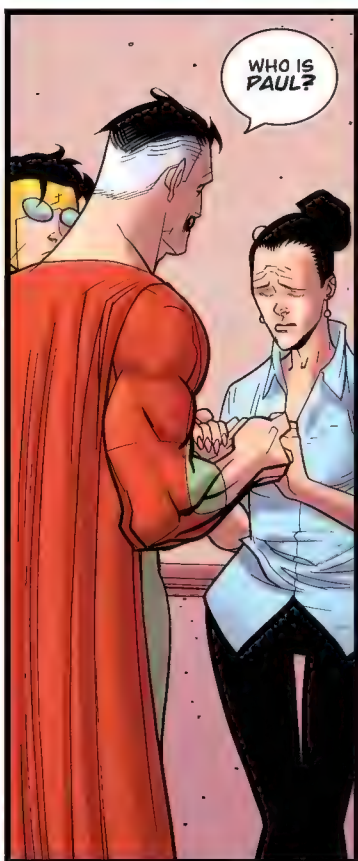
SCREW YOU, PAUL.

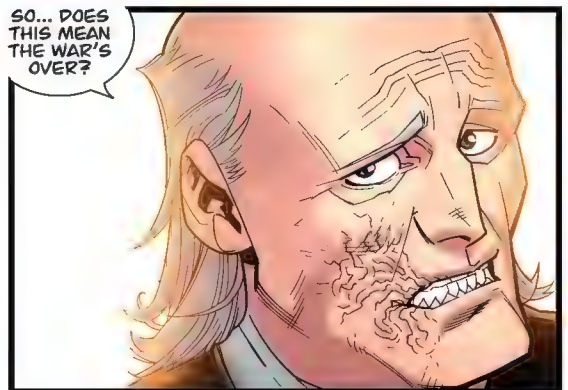
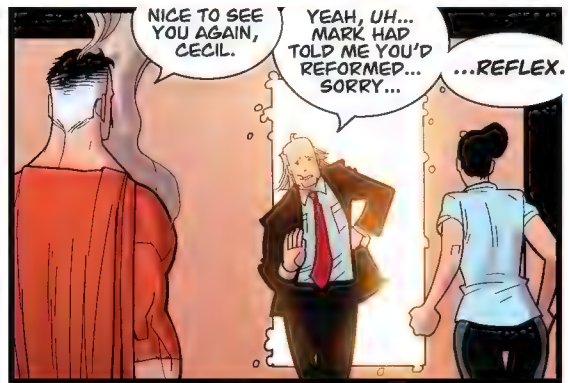
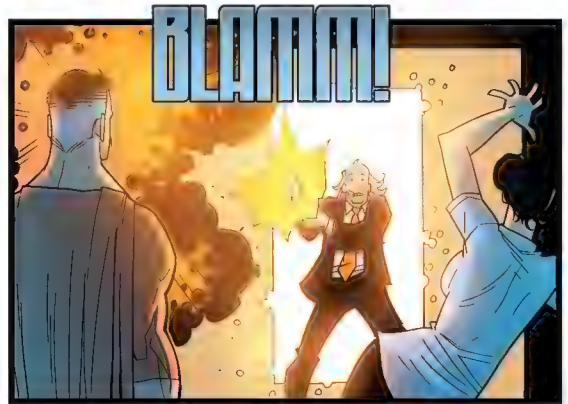
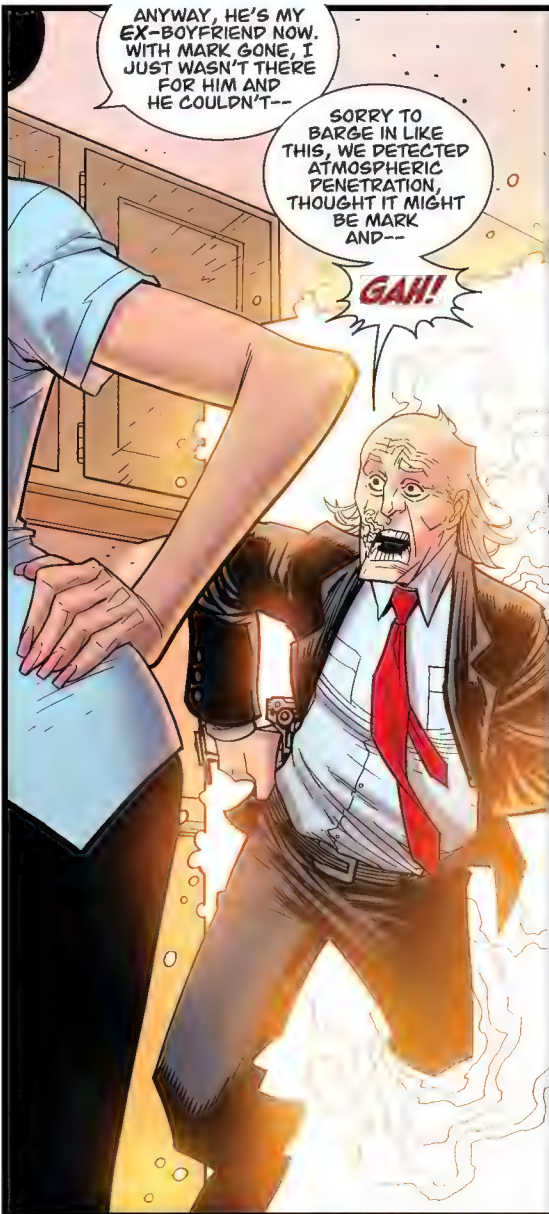


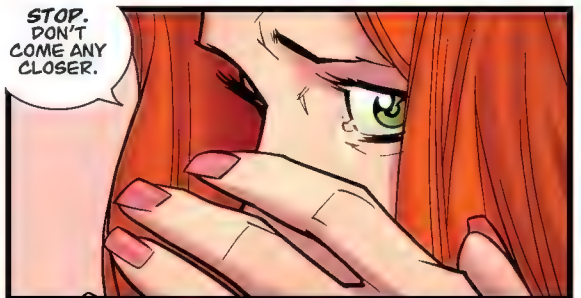
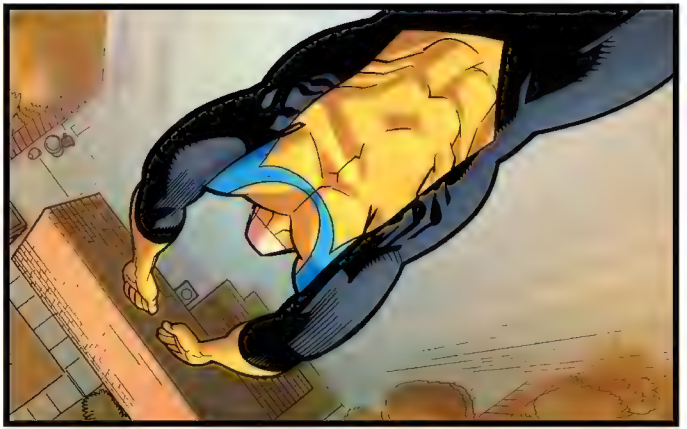
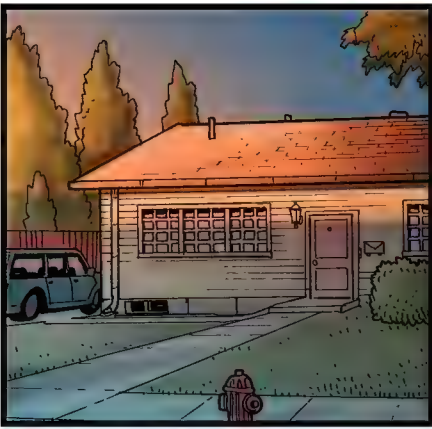
WHO'S PAUL?



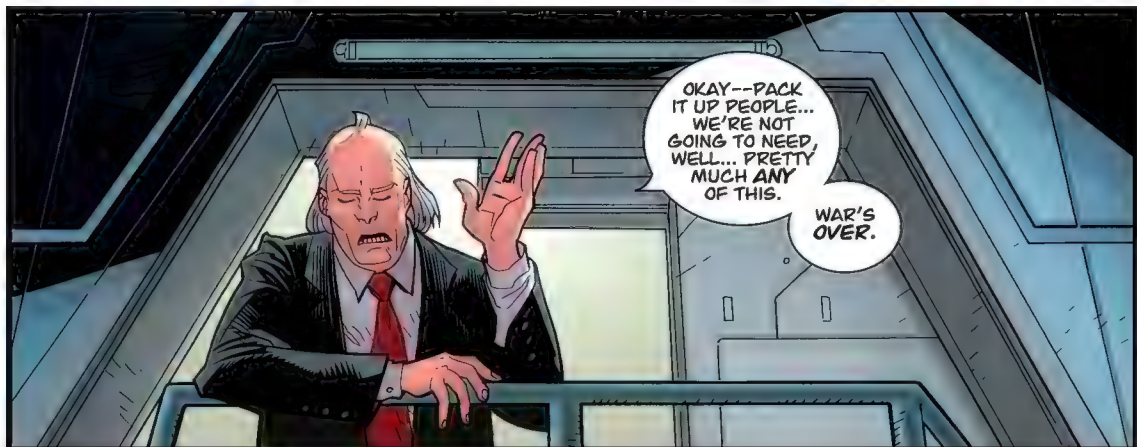
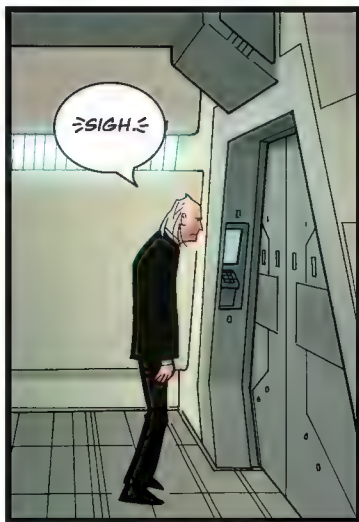
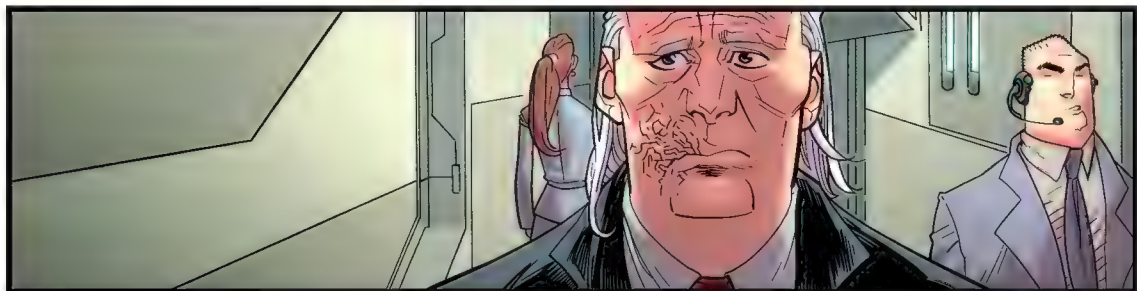
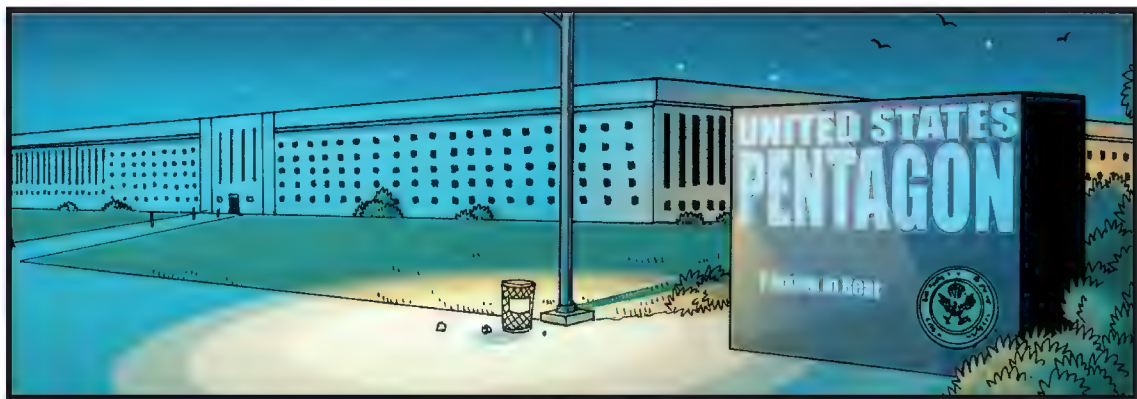






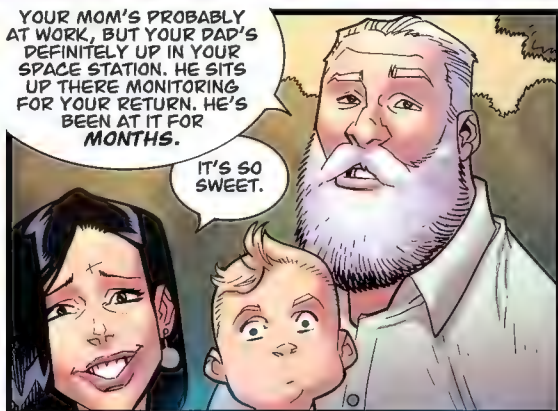
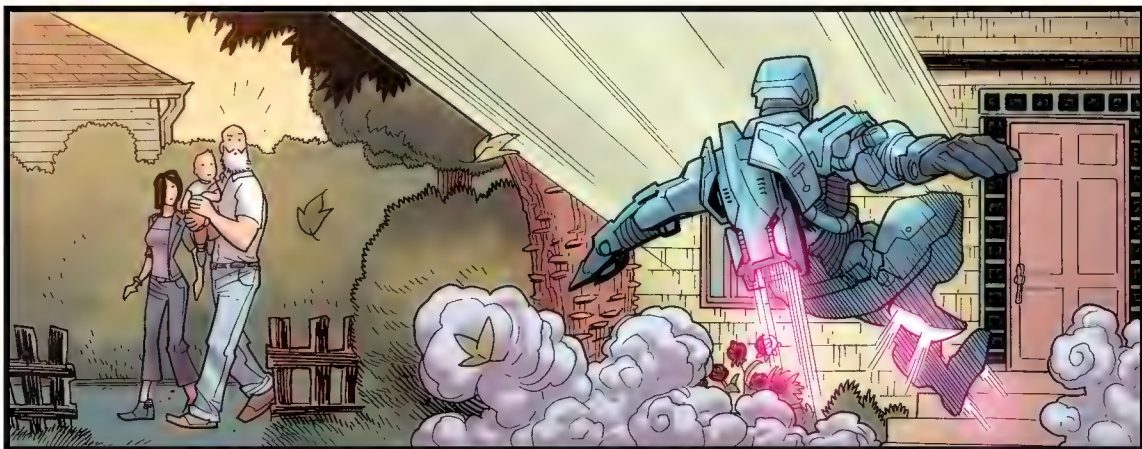








BUMMER.





I'VE BEEN KEEPING THE BUSINESS GOING. BULLETPROOF HAS BEEN HELPING OUT. IT'S BEEN TOUGH, BUT I'VE MANAGED.

GOT MY POWERS BACK, TOO... AT LEAST... IT SEEMS THEY'VE STOPPED ACTING UP.

WELL, THAT'S GREAT NEWS.



AND YOU'RE STILL LIVING HERE AT HOME?

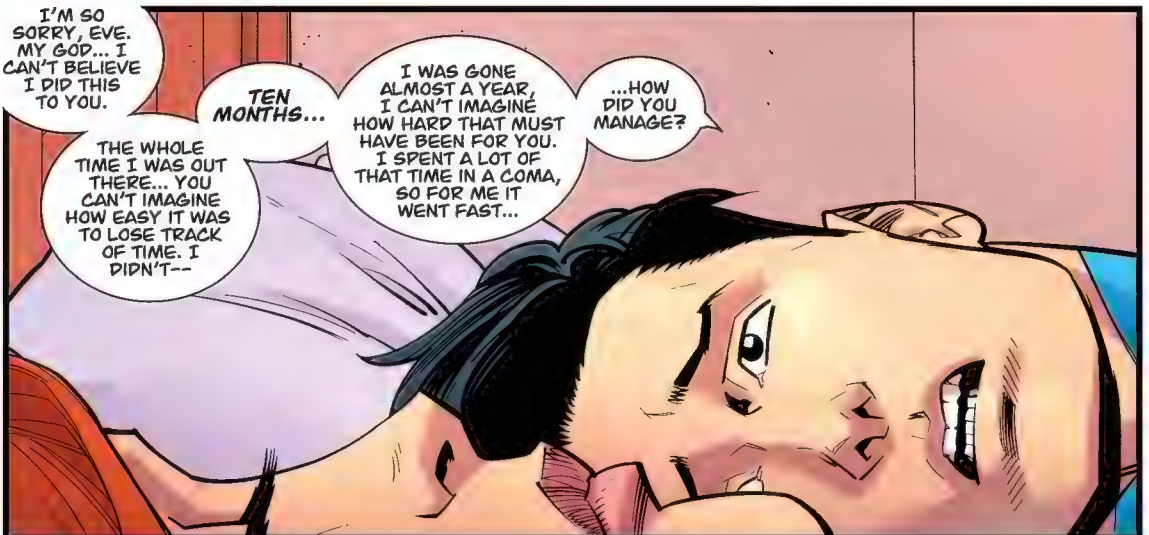


I'VE GOT MORE THAN ENOUGH MONEY SAVED UP TO BUY SOME LAND, AND WITH MY POWERS WORKING AGAIN I COULD BUILD SOMETHING SIMILAR TO WHAT I HAD IN AFRICA...

BUT WITH YOU GONE...



...I JUST DIDN'T SEE THE POINT.



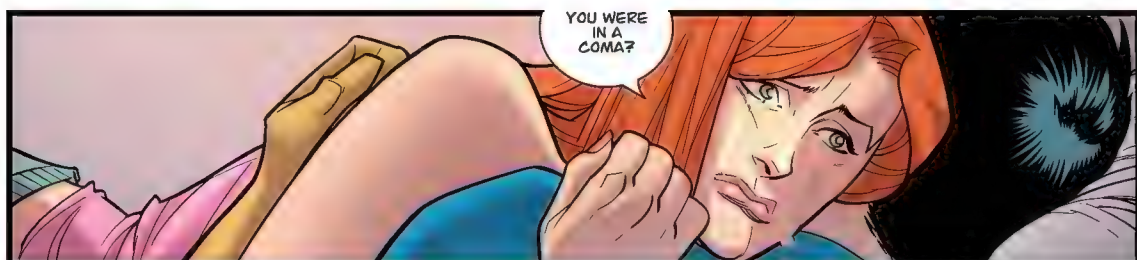
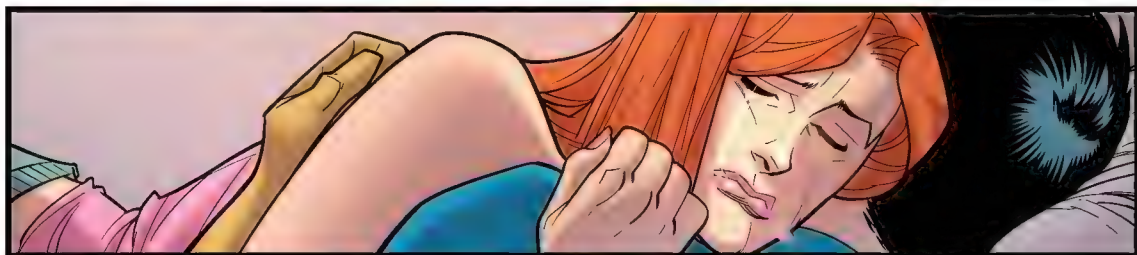
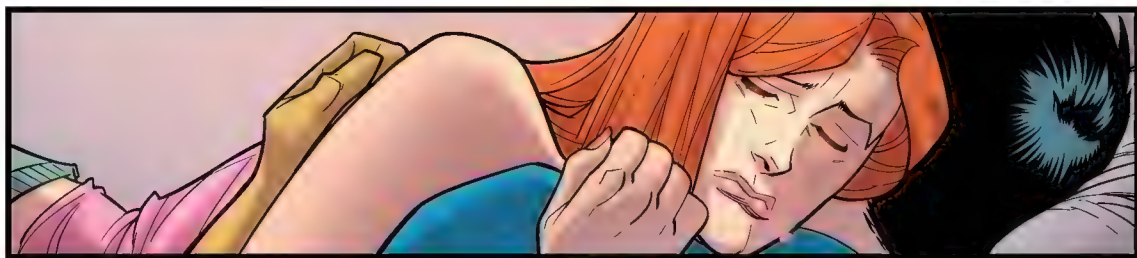
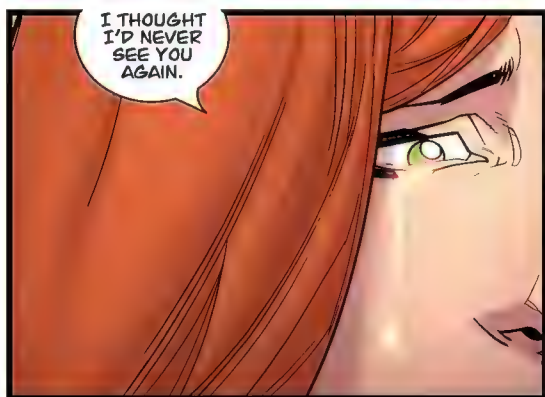
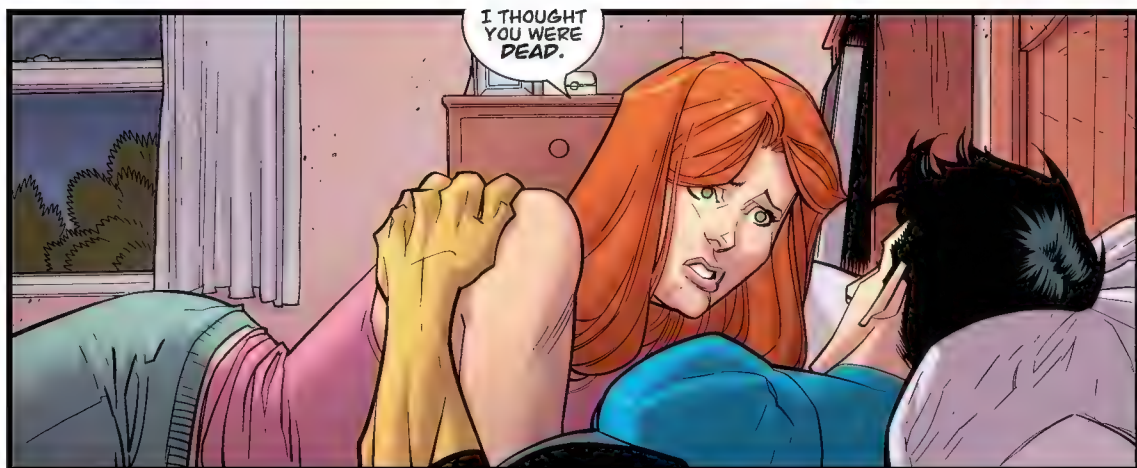
I'M SO SORRY, EVE. MY GOD... I CAN'T BELIEVE I DID THIS TO YOU.

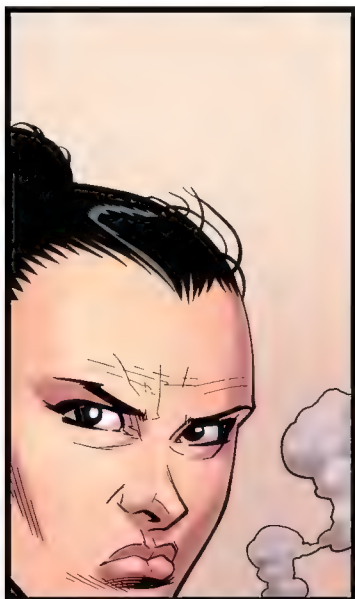
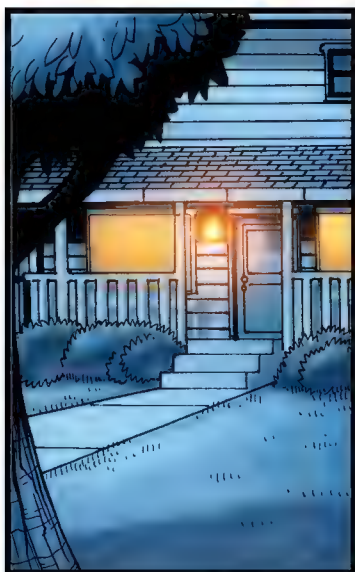
TEN MONTHS...

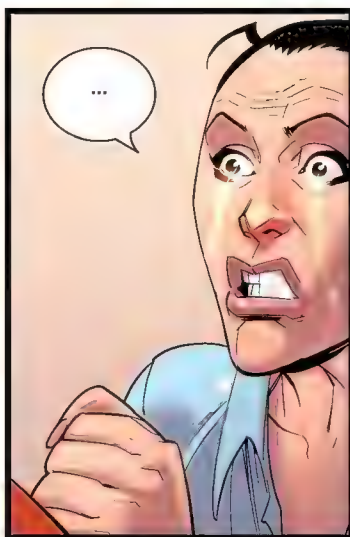
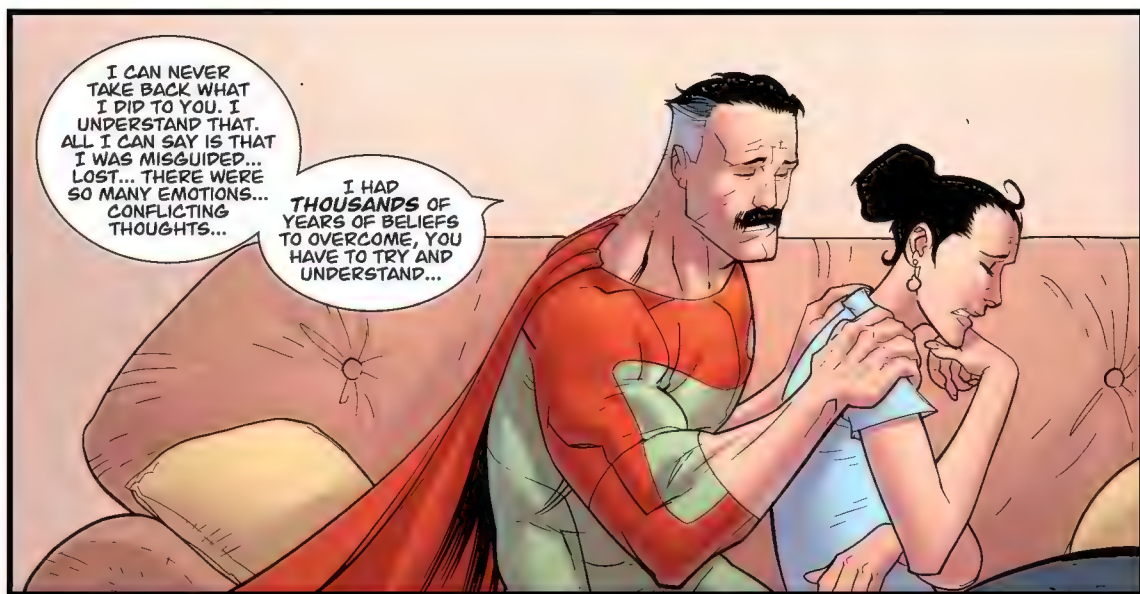
THE WHOLE TIME I WAS OUT THERE... YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW EASY IT WAS TO LOSE TRACK OF TIME. I DIDN'T--

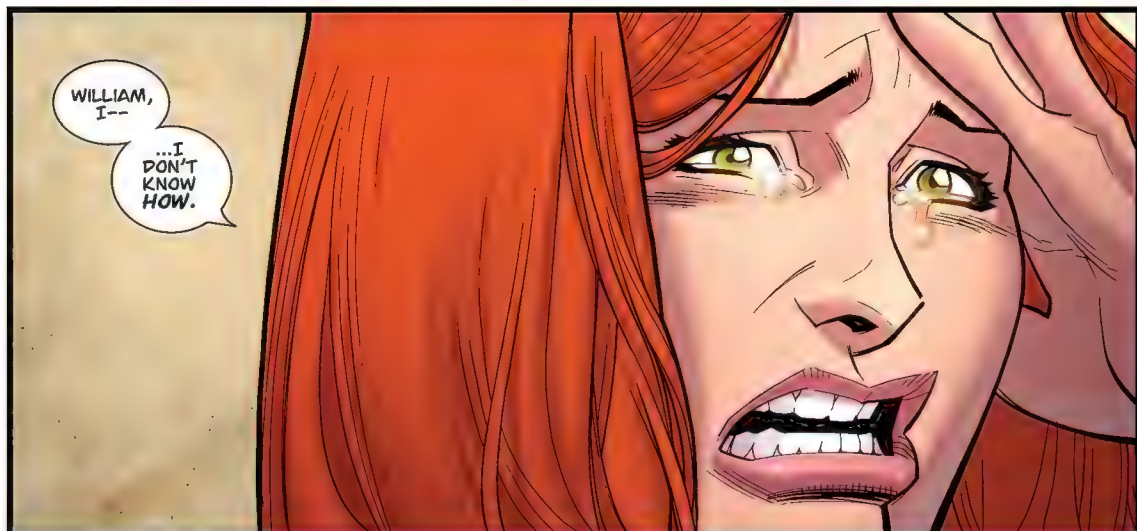
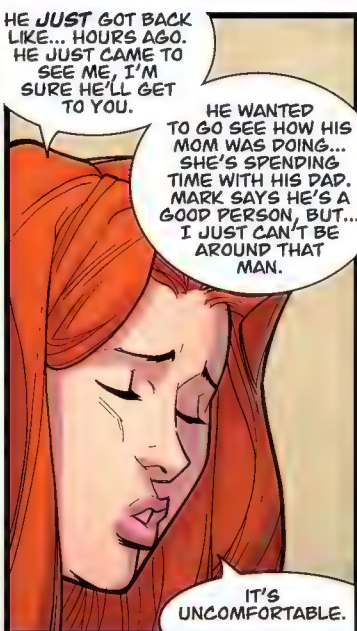
I WAS GONE ALMOST A YEAR, I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW HARD THAT MUST HAVE BEEN FOR YOU. I SPENT A LOT OF THAT TIME IN A COMA, SO FOR ME IT WENT FAST...

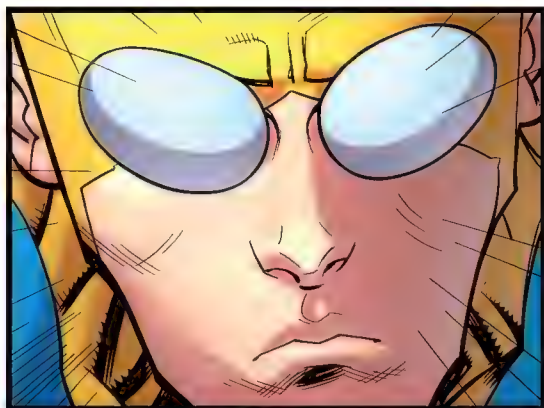
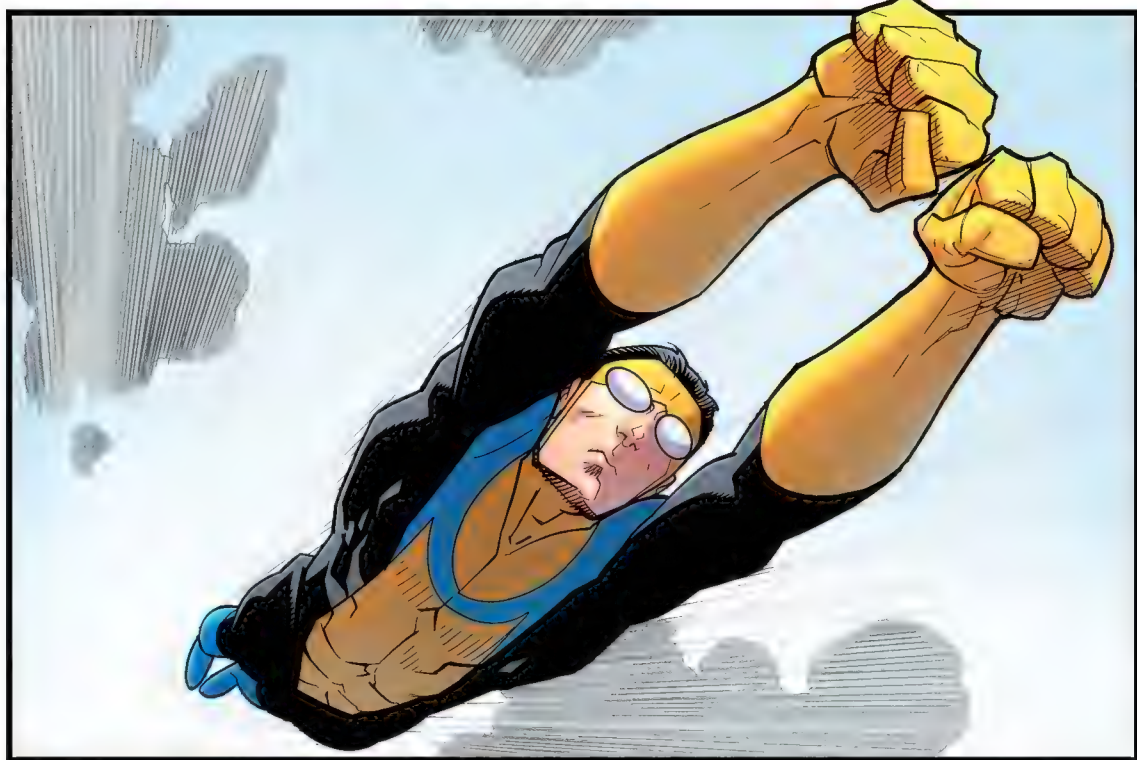
...HOW DID YOU MANAGE?













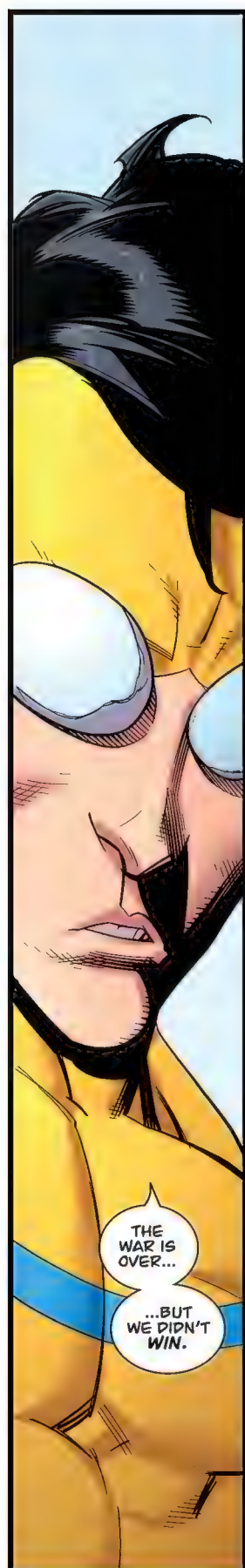
I KILLED
CONQUEST.

WE
DESTROYED
VILTRUM.

WE ENDED
THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE.

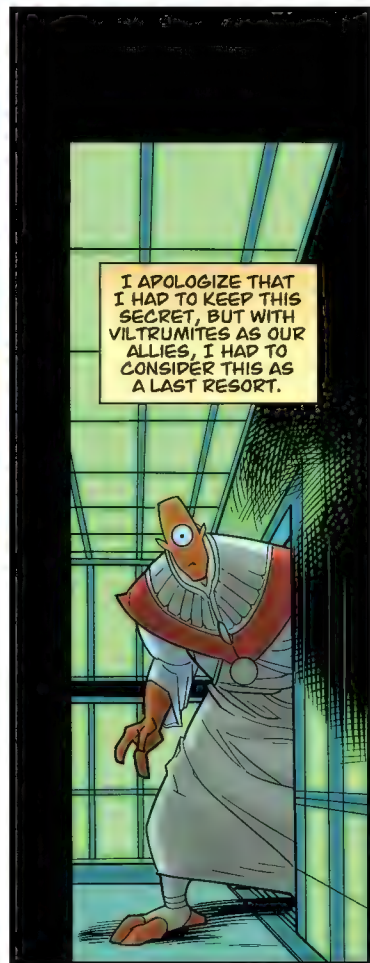
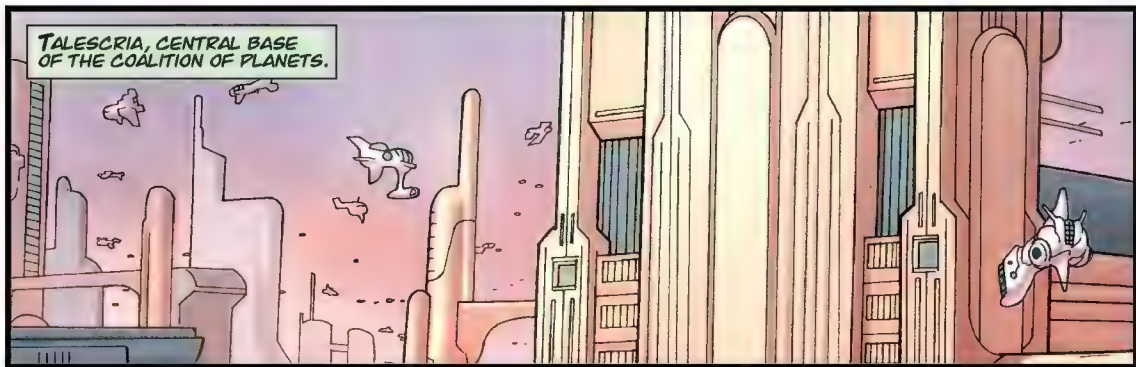
...

BUT
NOW
THEY'RE
HERE...



THE
WAR IS
OVER...

...BUT
WE DIDN'T
WIN.





THE SCOURGE VIRUS.

THE VIRUS THAT
RAVAGED THE
VILTRUMITE
POPULATION...
NEARLY KILLED
THEM ALL.

THIS IS A STRONGER
STRAIN, PERFECTED...
IT WILL NOT FAIL
THIS TIME.

IF THE WAR EFFORT APPEARS
LOST, I URGE YOU TO USE IT...
IGNORE YOUR ATTACHMENT
TO OUR VILTRUMITE ALLIES.



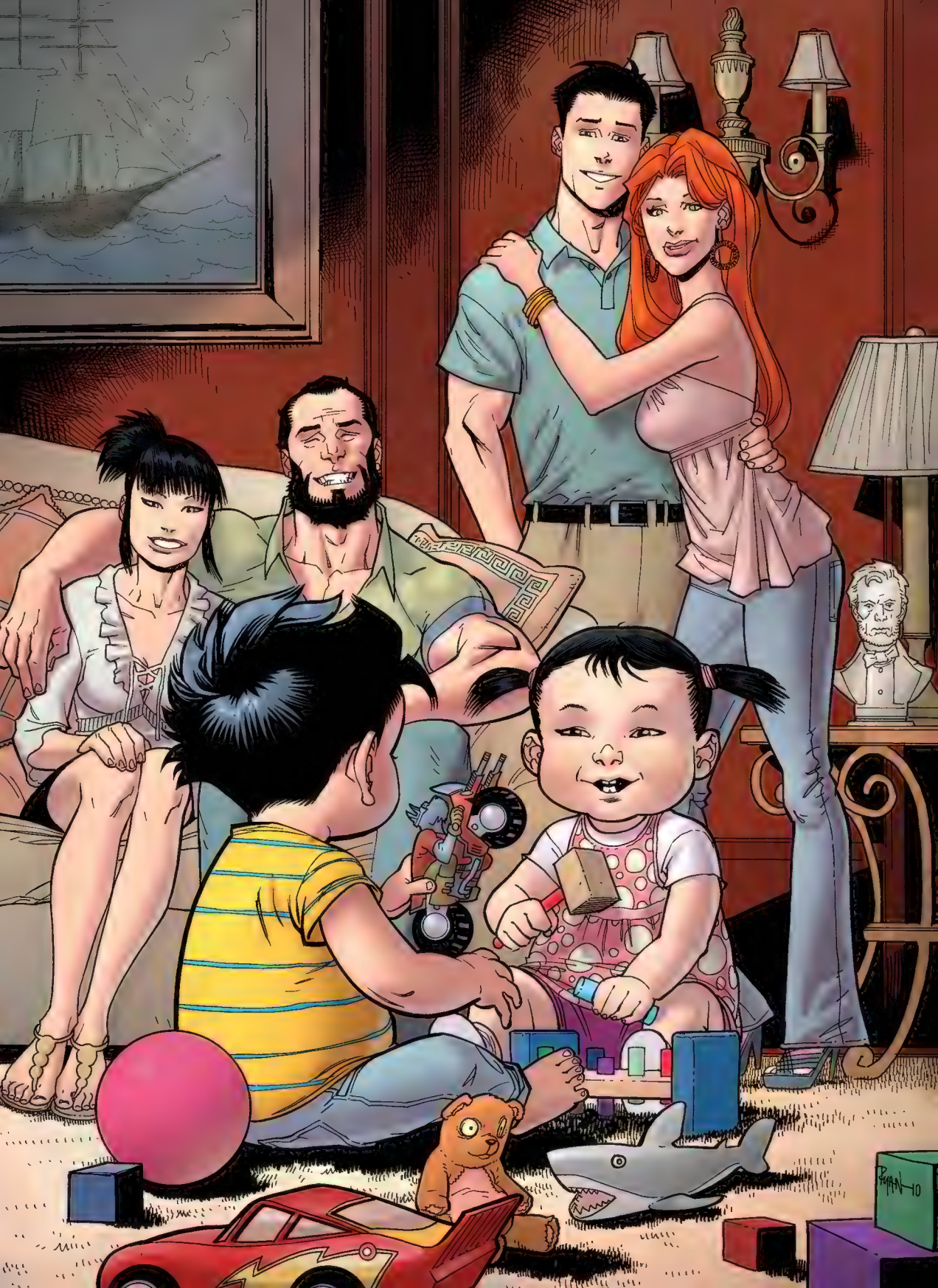
FOR THE GOOD OF
THE UNIVERSE.

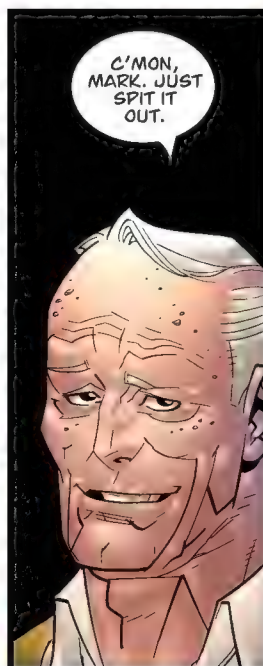
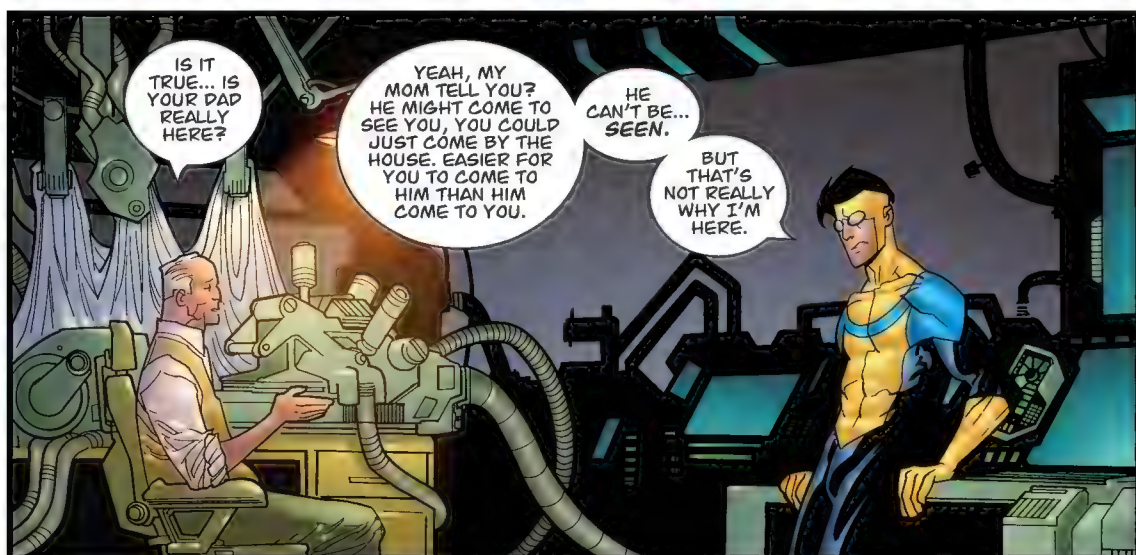
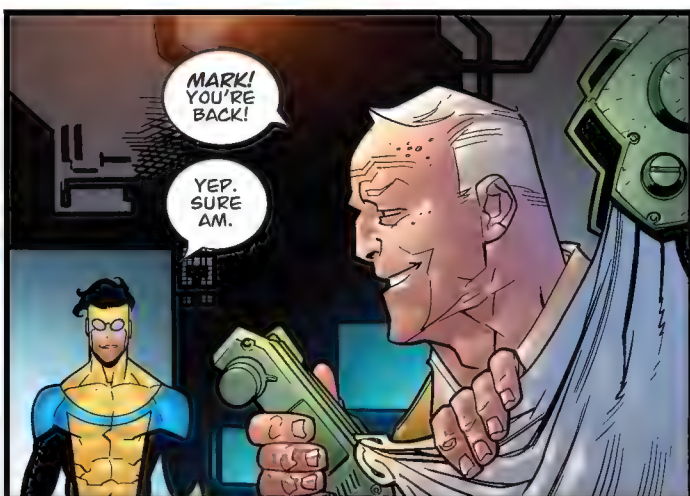
ERADICATE ALL
VILTRUM LIFE...
FOREVER.

WHATEVER YOU DO,
MAKE CERTAIN THAT
I DID NOT DIE IN VAIN.
-THAEDUS.



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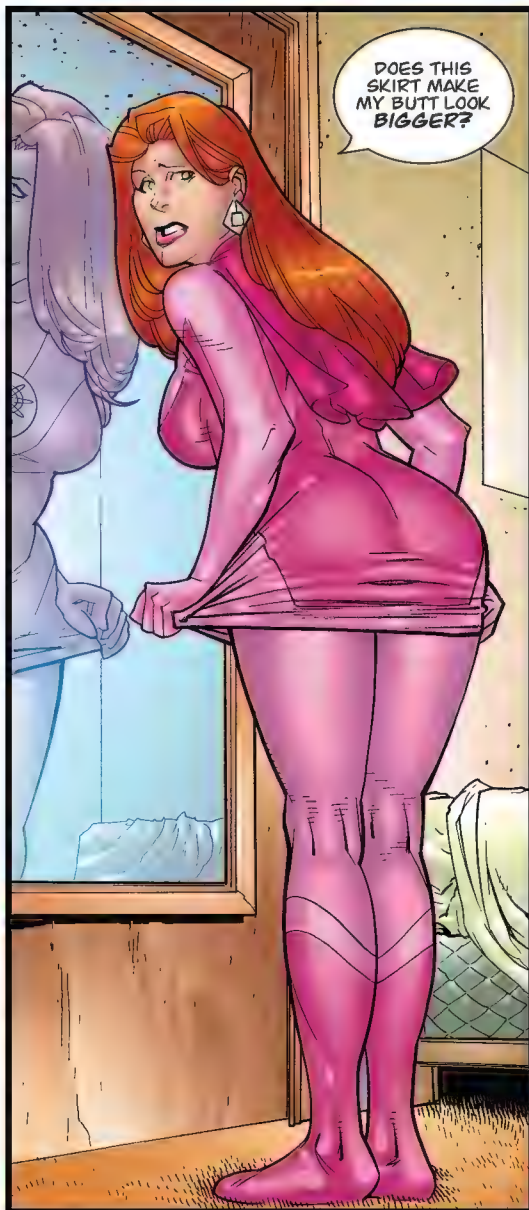
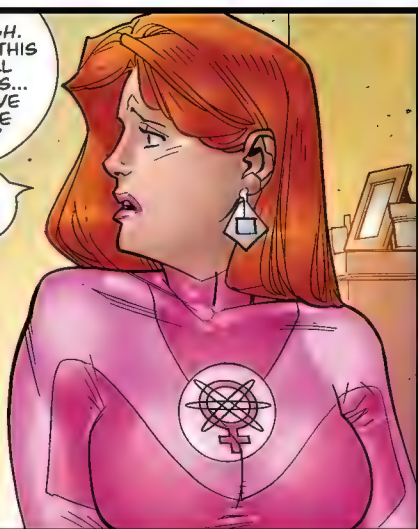


WHOA! ARE YOU GOING OUT? SOMETHING GOING ON?

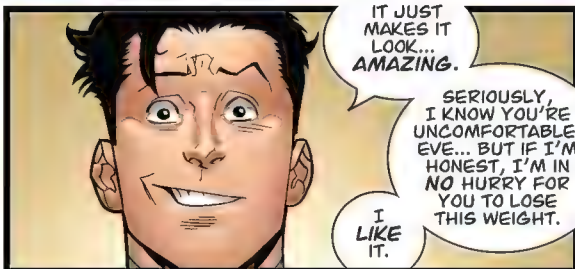


NO, I WAS--UGH. JUST SEEING IF THIS COSTUME STILL WORKED... I WAS... WHY'D YOU HAVE TO COME HOME RIGHT NOW?

JUST...



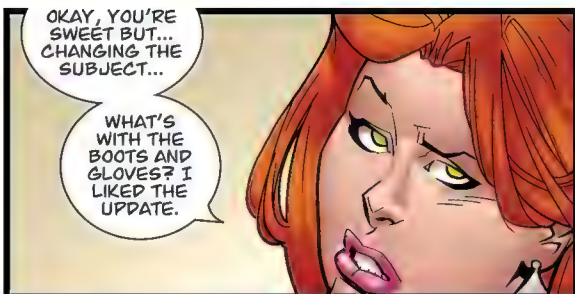
DOES THIS SKIRT MAKE MY BUTT LOOK BIGGER?



IT JUST MAKES IT LOOK... AMAZING.

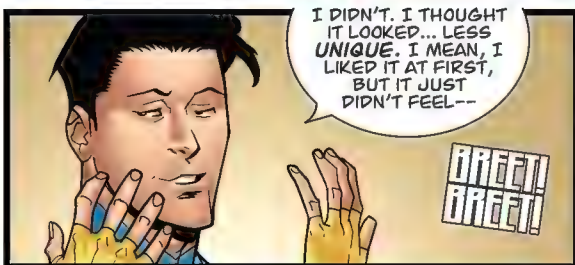
SERIOUSLY, I KNOW YOU'RE UNCOMFORTABLE, EVE... BUT IF I'M HONEST, I'M IN NO HURRY FOR YOU TO LOSE THIS WEIGHT.

I LIKE IT.



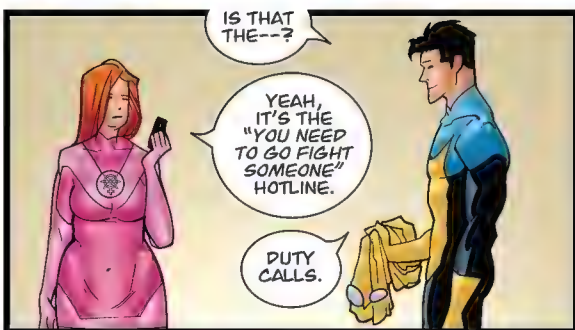
OKAY, YOU'RE SWEET BUT... CHANGING THE SUBJECT...

WHAT'S WITH THE BOOTS AND GLOVES? I LIKED THE UPDATE.



I DIDN'T. I THOUGHT IT LOOKED... LESS UNIQUE. I MEAN, I LIKED IT AT FIRST, BUT IT JUST DIDN'T FEEL--

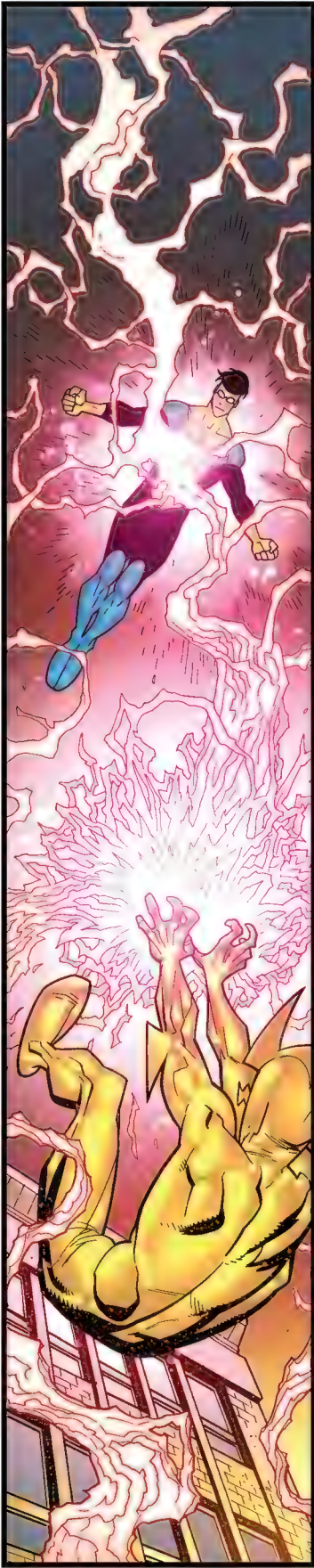
BREET!
BREET!



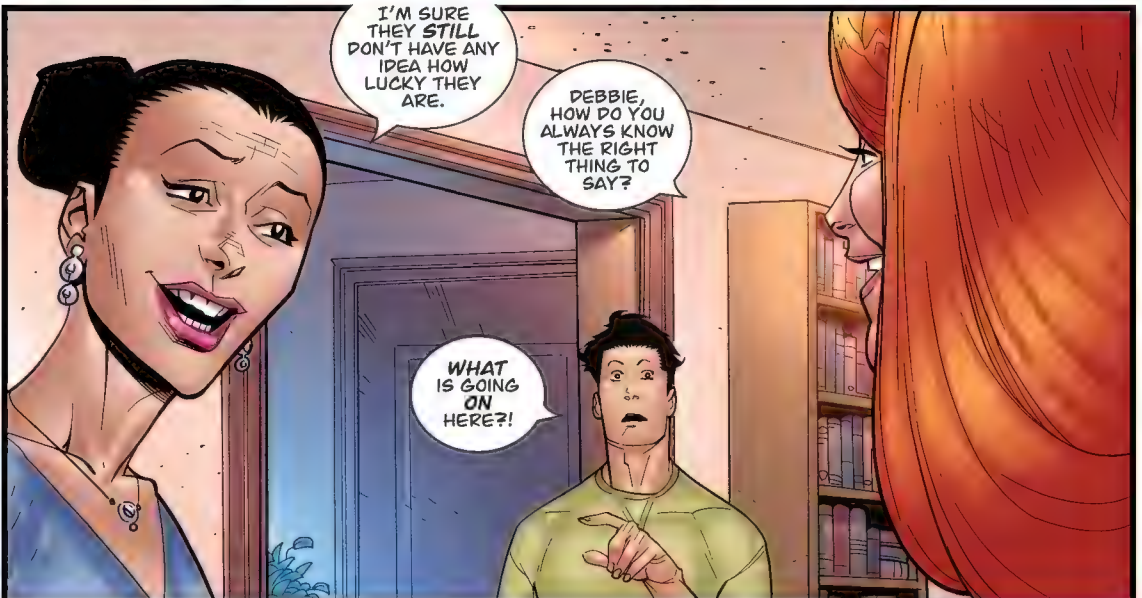
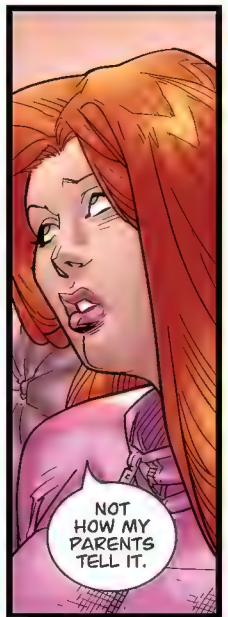
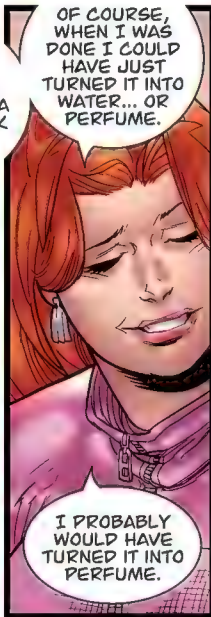
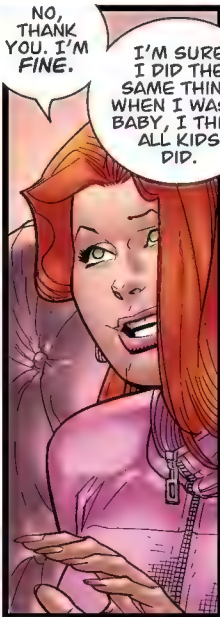
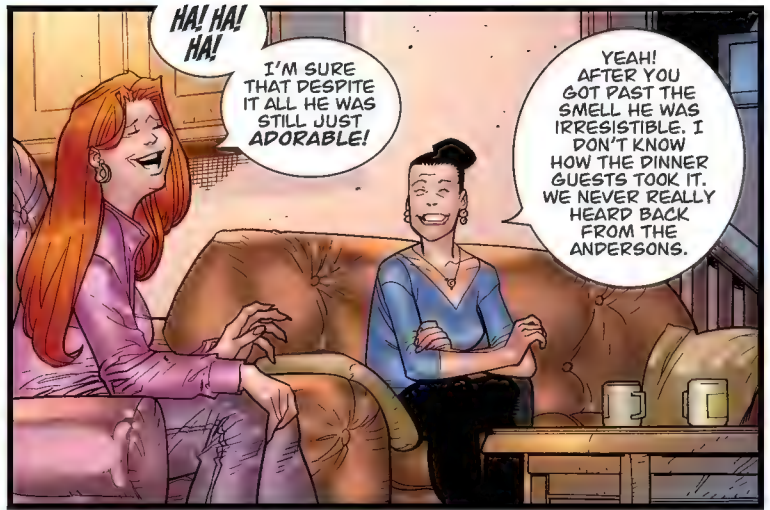
IS THAT THE--?

YEAH, IT'S THE "YOU NEED TO GO FIGHT SOMEONE" HOTLINE.

DUTY CALLS.







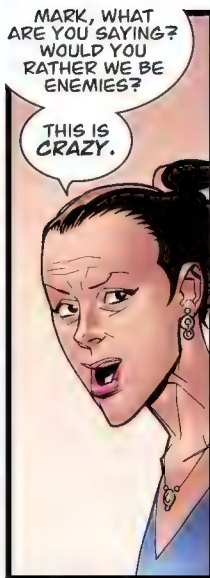


I KNEW YOU WERE TAKING CARE OF THAT BANK THING TONIGHT AND I DIDN'T HAVE ANY PLANS SO I POPPED OVER TO SEE YOUR MOM.

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

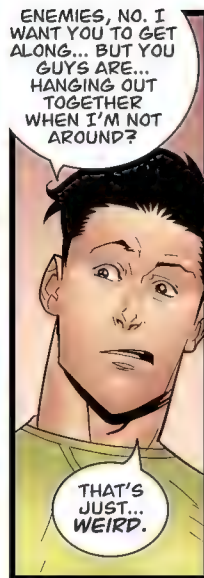


SO YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH MY MOM?



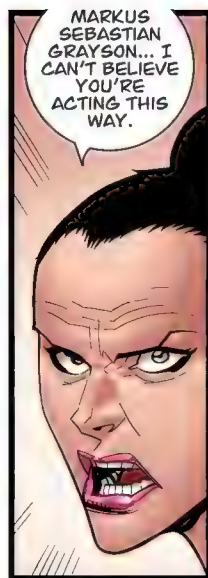
MARK, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? WOULD YOU RATHER WE BE ENEMIES?

THIS IS CRAZY.

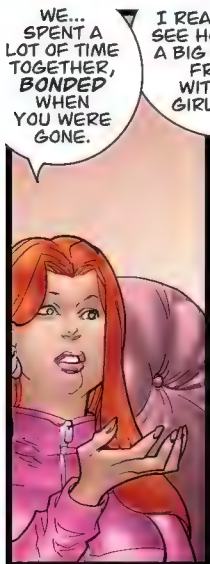


ENEMIES, NO. I WANT YOU TO GET ALONG... BUT YOU GUYS ARE... HANGING OUT TOGETHER WHEN I'M NOT AROUND?

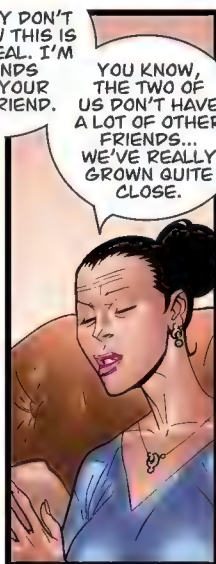
THAT'S JUST... WEIRD.



MARKUS SEBASTIAN GRAYSON... I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE ACTING THIS WAY.



WE... SPENT A LOT OF TIME TOGETHER, BONDED, WHEN YOU WERE GONE.



I REALLY DON'T SEE HOW THIS IS A BIG DEAL. I'M FRIENDS WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND.

YOU KNOW, THE TWO OF US DON'T HAVE A LOT OF OTHER FRIENDS... WE'VE REALLY GROWN QUITE CLOSE.



YOU'RE MAKING IT WORSE.



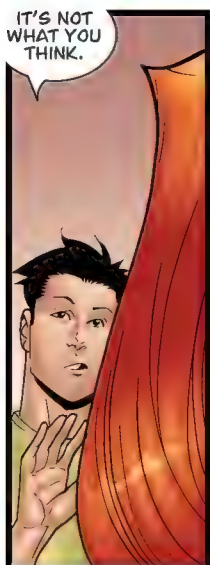
REALLY, MARK. YOU'RE BOTH ADULTS NOW. YOU TURNED TWENTY WHILE YOU WERE AWAY.

YOU REALLY WANT ME SCOLDING YOU WHEN I SEE HER FACE IN YOUR LAP WHEN YOU'RE FORTY?

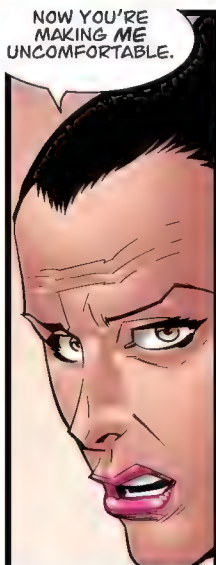


UH...

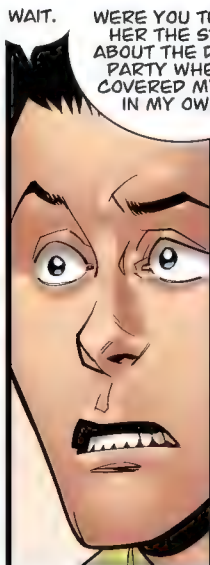
WHEN WAS MY FACE IN HIS LAP?



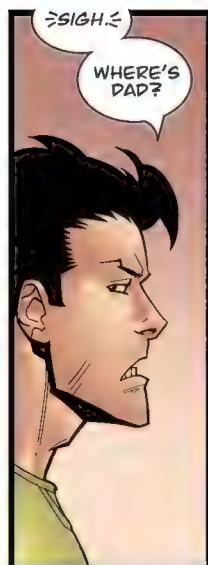
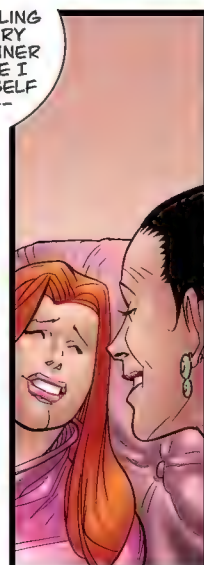
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.



NOW YOU'RE MAKING ME UNCOMFORTABLE.

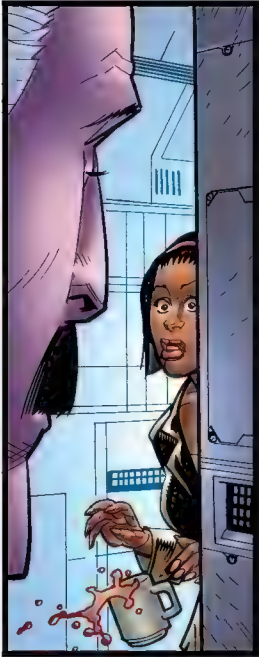
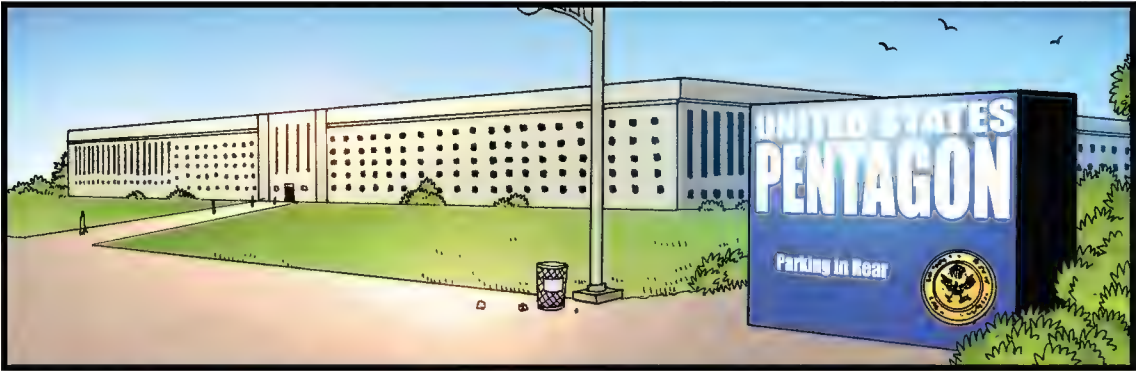


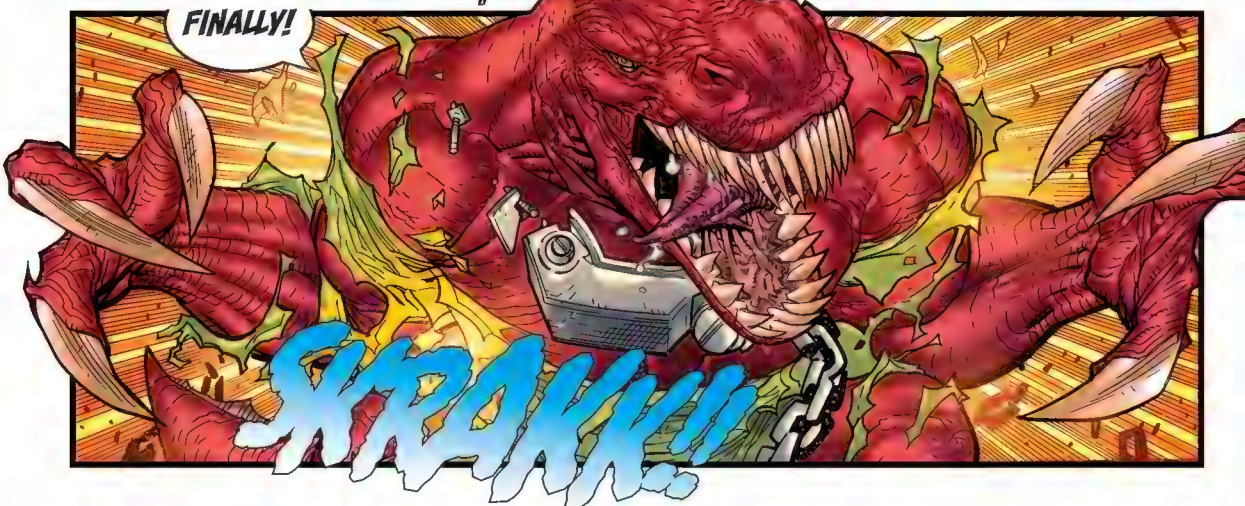
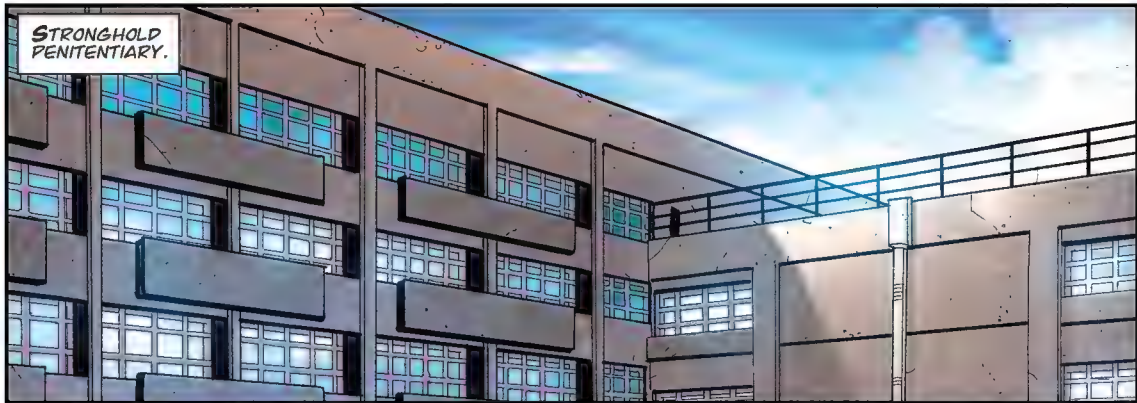
WAIT. WERE YOU TELLING HER THE STORY ABOUT THE DINNER PARTY WHERE I COVERED MYSELF IN MY OWN--



==SIGH==

WHERE'S DAD?







WE DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.

NO, IT'S NOT THAT. I ACTUALLY REALLY WANT TO DO THIS. I HAVE ALMOST NO FRIENDS AND KATE AND I USED TO BE REALLY CLOSE.

TO BE HONEST, I WAS SHOCKED WHEN SHE INVITED US.

I JUST HATE BEING IN THIS COSTUME. I LOOK HORRIBLE, I FEEL HORRIBLE. I SHOULD HAVE JUST FLOWN OVER IN PLAIN CLOTHES.



YOU LOOK GREAT. WILL YOU STOP FISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS?

SHUT UP.

THAT'S THEIR HOUSE OVER THERE.

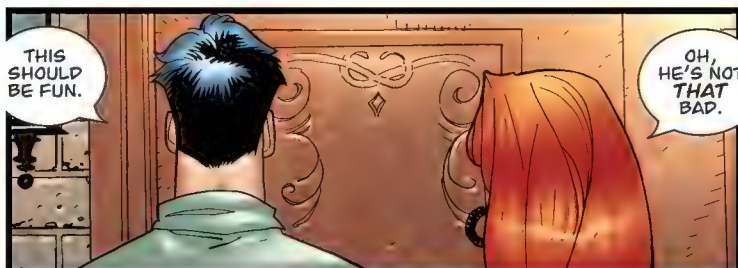


READY TO GO?

SEE ANY CIVILIANS AROUND?



ALL CLEAR.



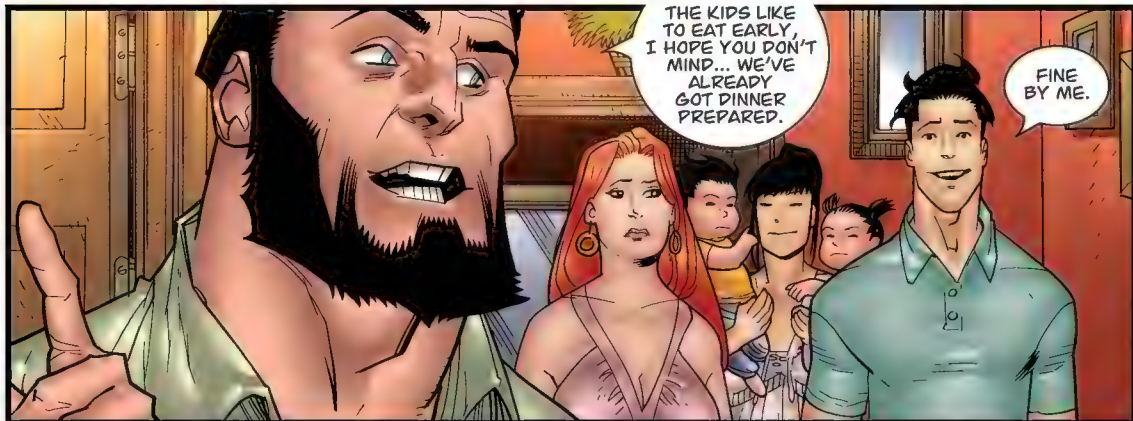
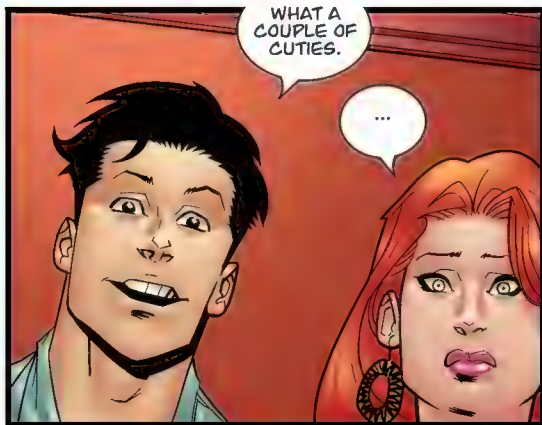
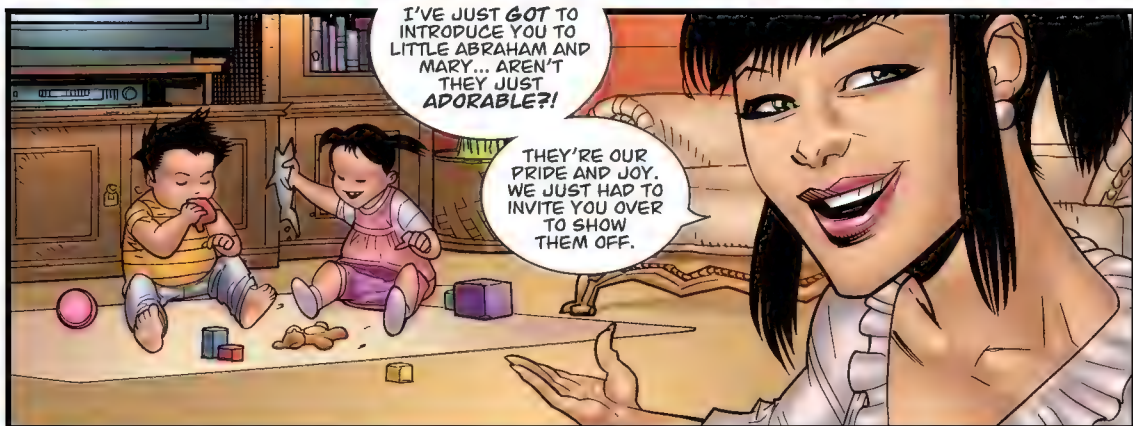
THIS SHOULD BE FUN.

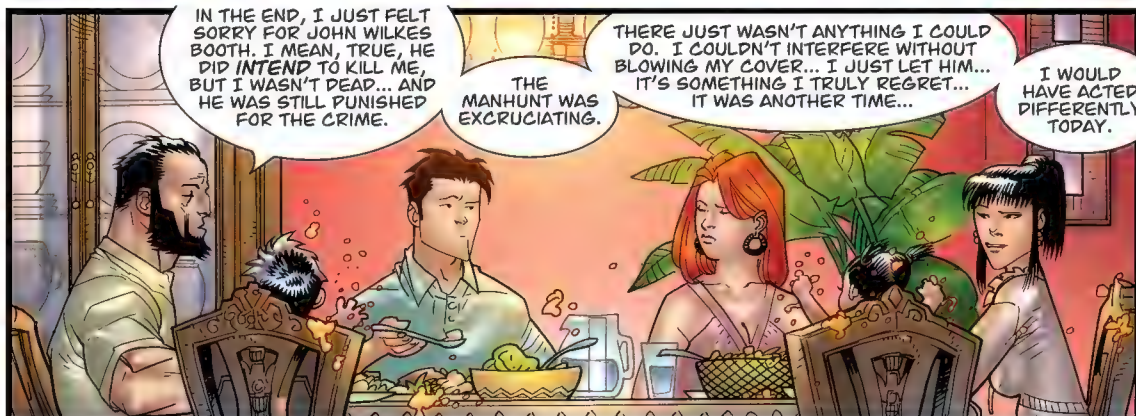
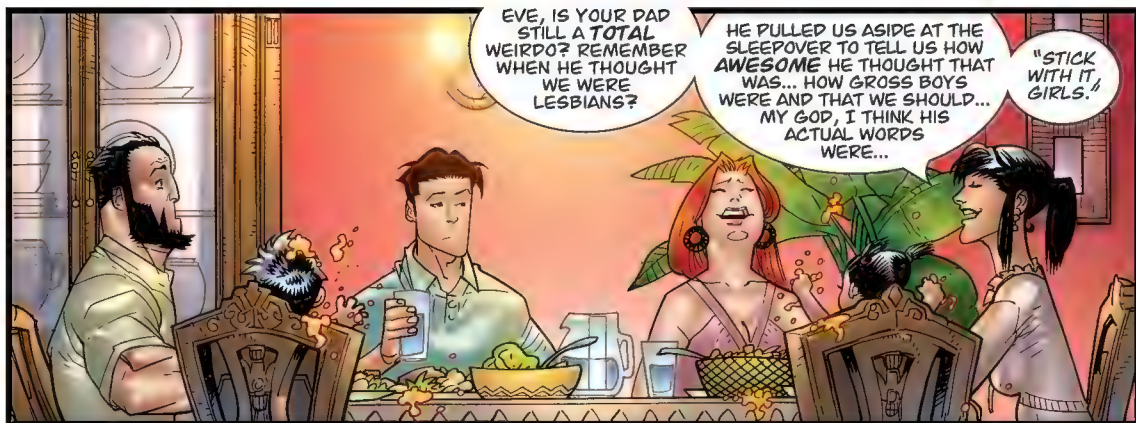
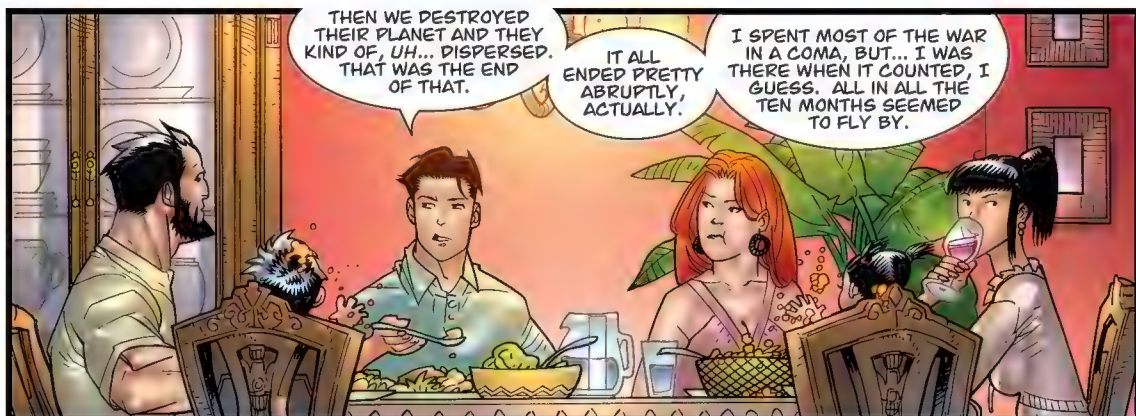
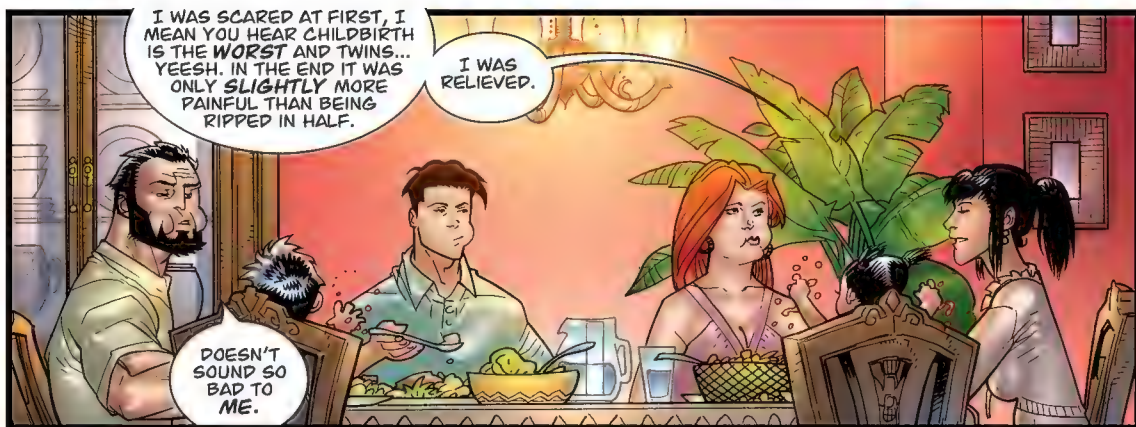
OH, HE'S NOT THAT BAD.



EVE, INVINCIBLE... PLEASE COME IN.

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT.







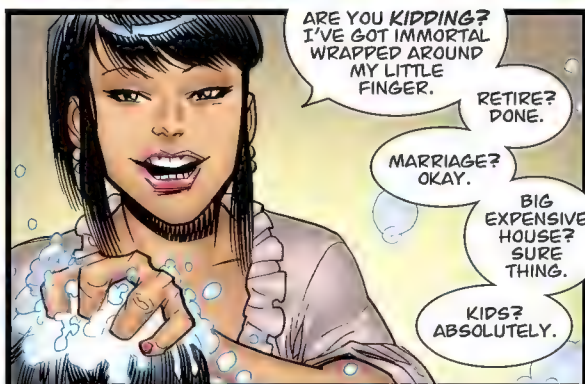
YOU AND MARK ARE **AWESOME** TOGETHER. I CAN SEE HOW MUCH HE LOVES YOU.

YEAH?

PLEASE. DON'T ACT LIKE YOU DON'T SEE IT.

I DO. I THINK I DO. Y'KNOW... I MEAN, YOU HOPE BUT YOU CAN NEVER REALLY KNOW, CAN YOU?

DO YOU EVER REALLY KNOW HOW STRONG A RELATIONSHIP IS?



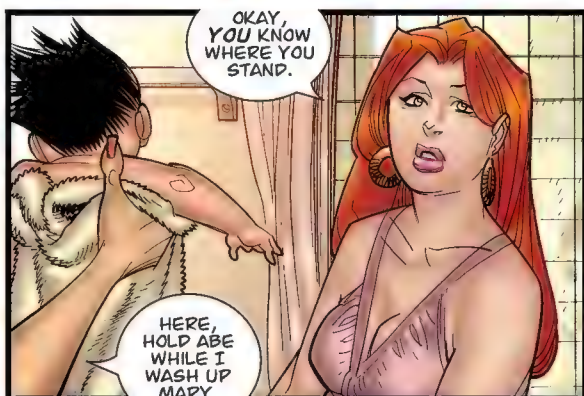
ARE YOU KIDDING? I'VE GOT IMMORTAL WRAPPED AROUND MY LITTLE FINGER.

RETIRE? DONE.

MARRIAGE? OKAY.

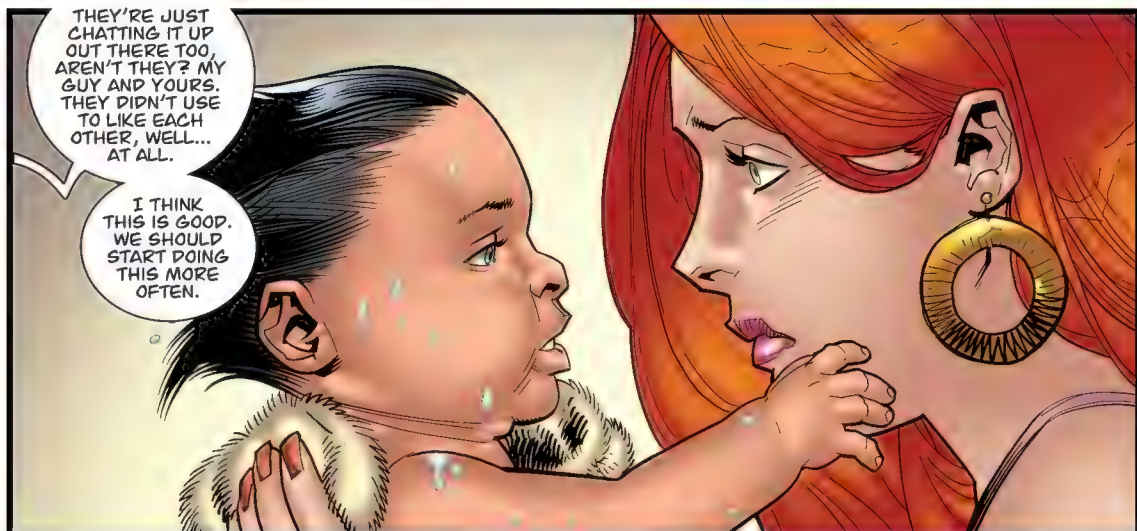
BIG EXPENSIVE HOUSE? SURE THING.

KIDS? ABSOLUTELY.



OKAY, YOU KNOW WHERE YOU STAND.

HERE, HOLD ABE WHILE I WASH UP MARY.



THEY'RE JUST CHATTING IT UP OUT THERE TOO, AREN'T THEY? MY GUY AND YOURS. THEY DIDN'T USE TO LIKE EACH OTHER, WELL... AT ALL.

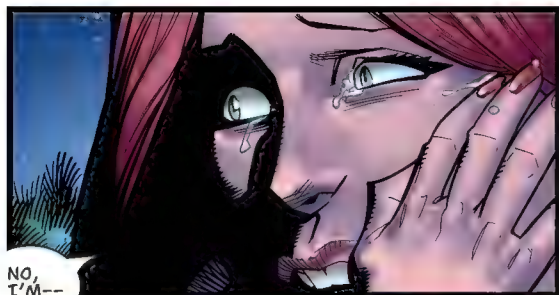
I THINK THIS IS GOOD. WE SHOULD START DOING THIS MORE OFTEN.



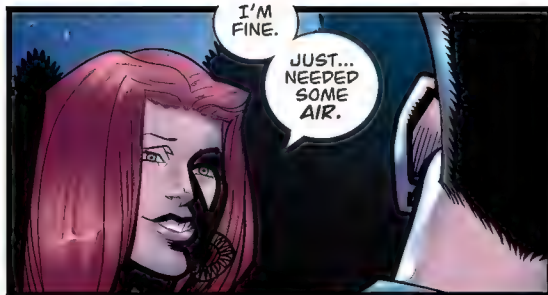


EVE?

WHAT
HAPPENED?
KATE SAID YOU
WERE CRYING,
ARE YOU
UPSET ABOUT
SOMETHING?

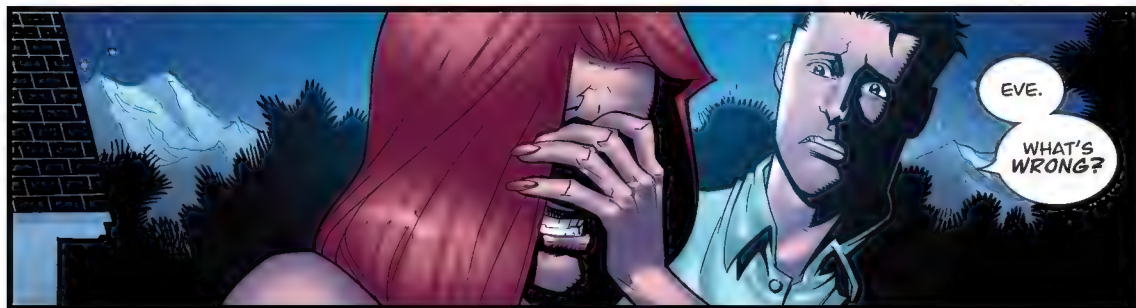


NO,
I'M--



I'M
FINE.

JUST...
NEEDED
SOME
AIR.



EVE.

WHAT'S
WRONG?



MARK,
I--

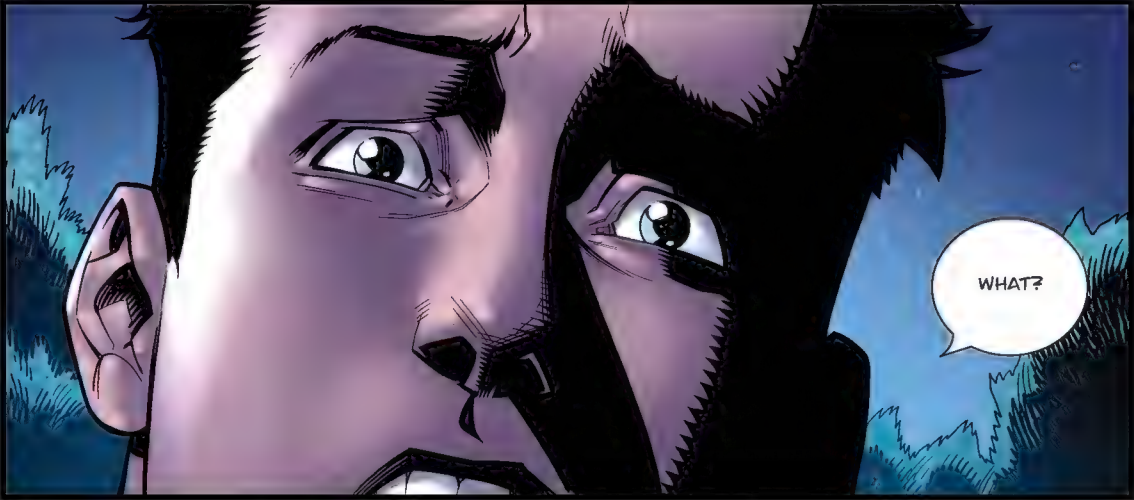
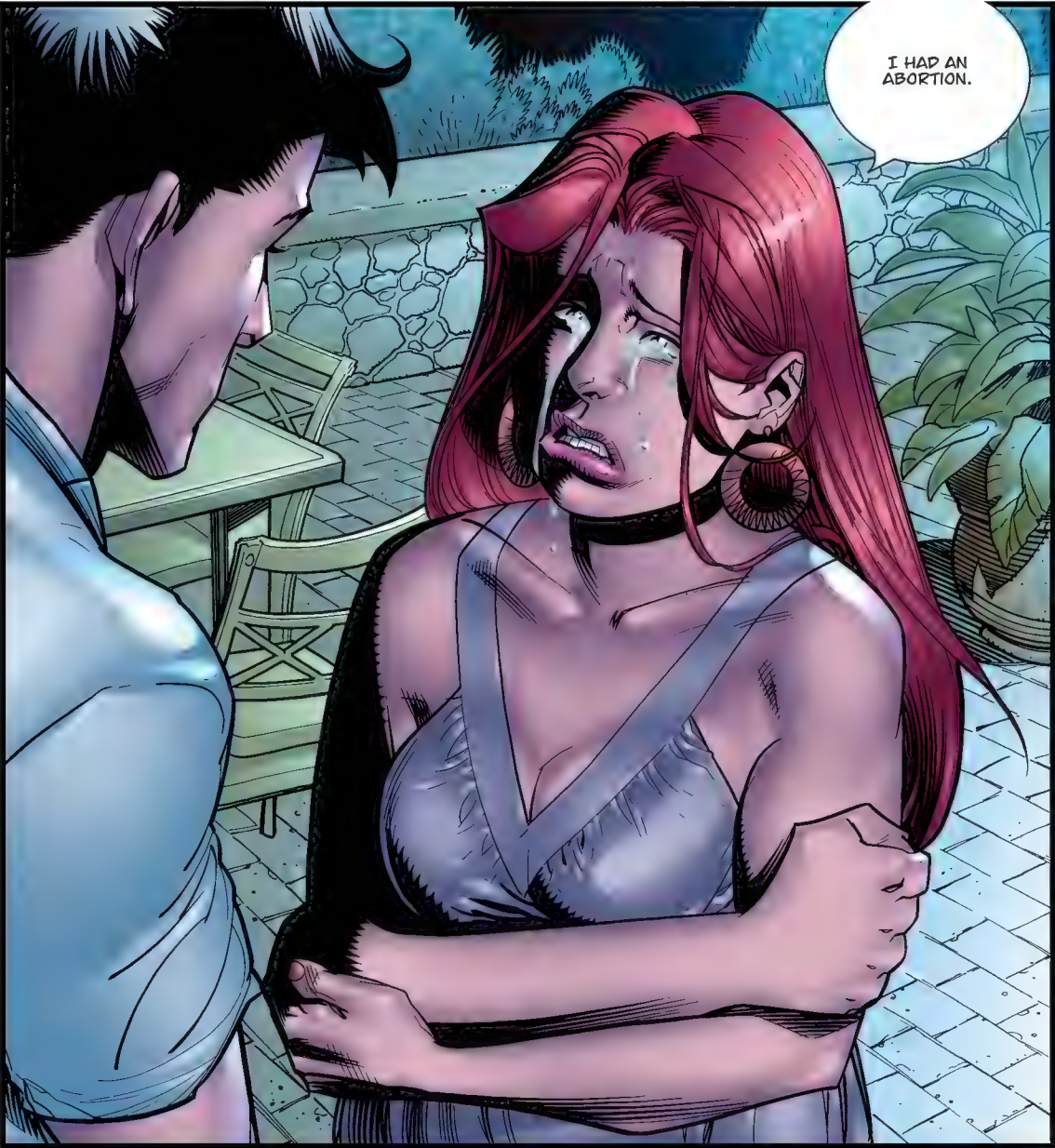
EVE,
SERIOUSLY...
WHAT
HAPPENED IN
THERE?

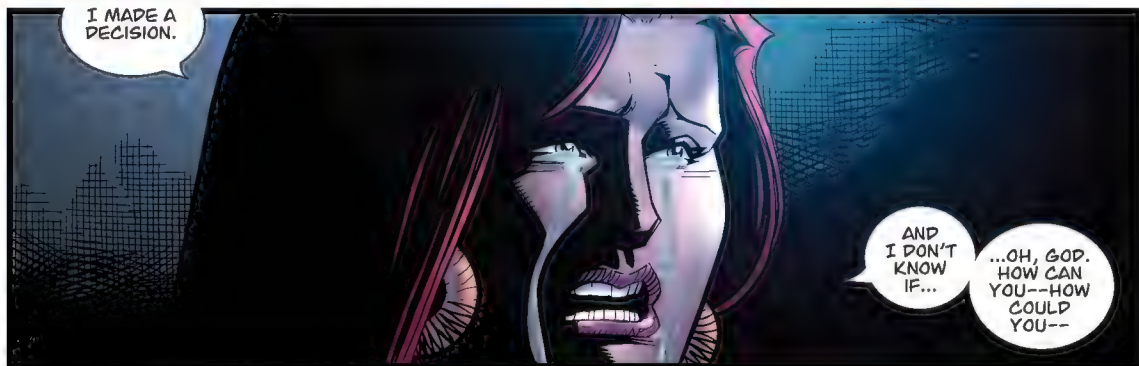
DID KATE SAY
SOMETHING?



NO,
JUST
LISTEN,
IT'S--

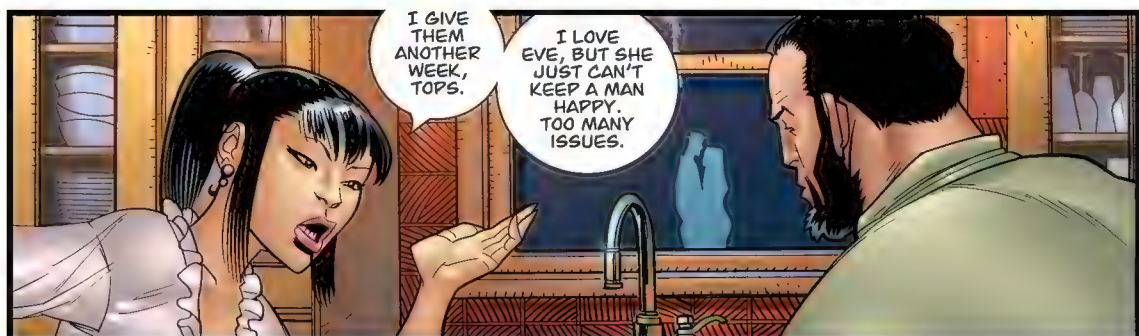
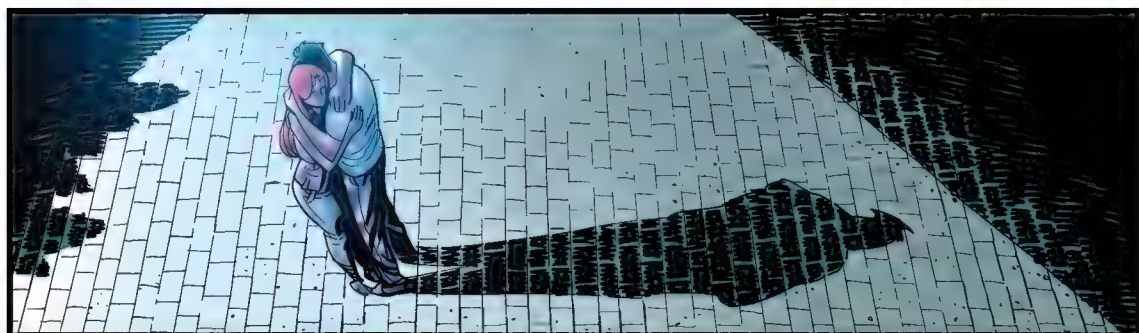
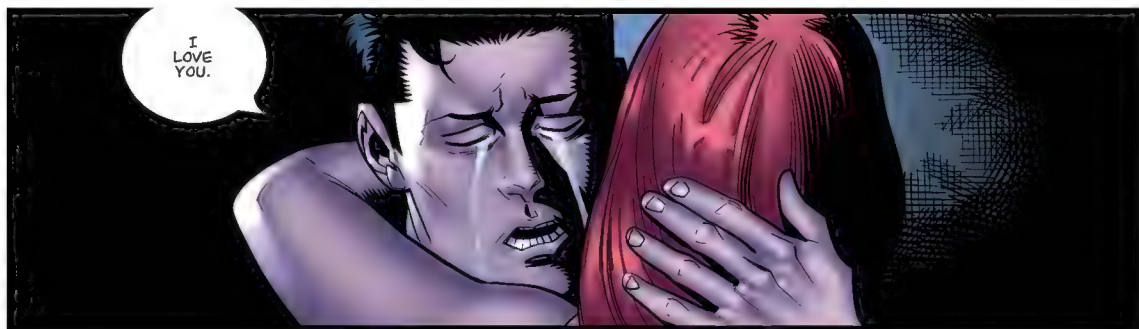
OH,
GOD...





I'M
SORRY
I DID THIS
TO YOU.





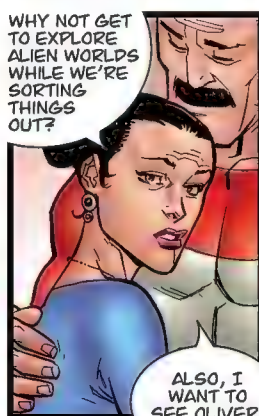
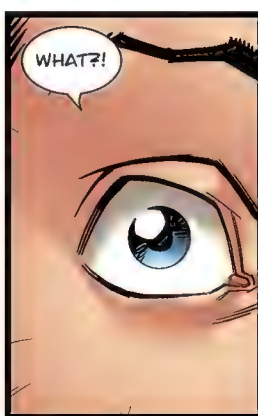
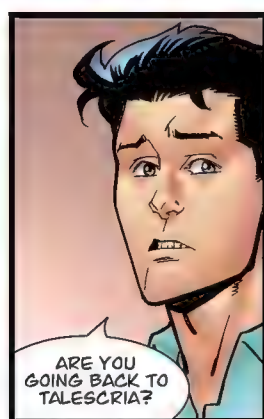
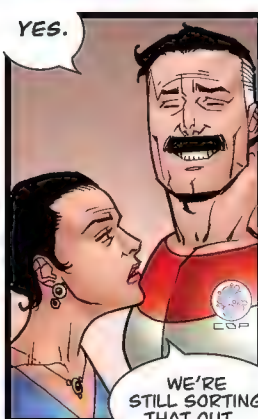
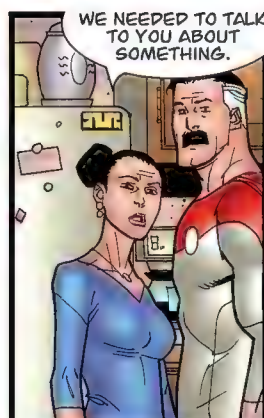
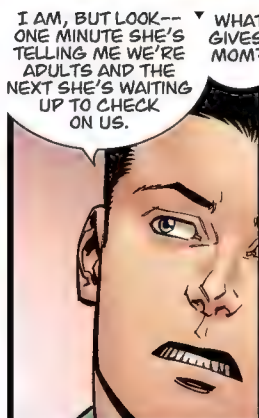
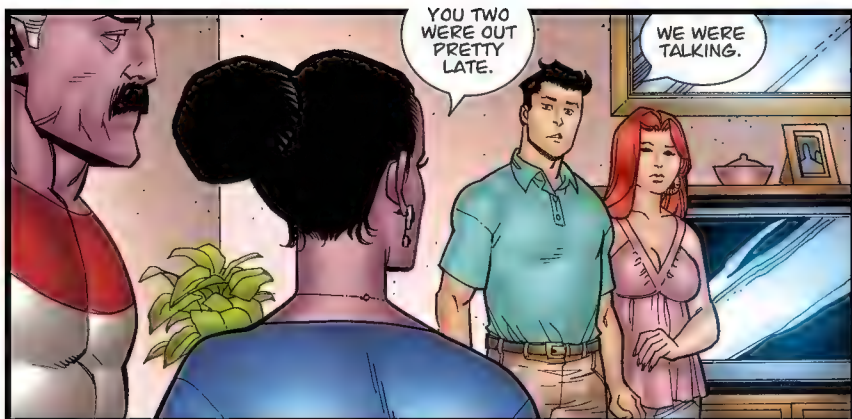


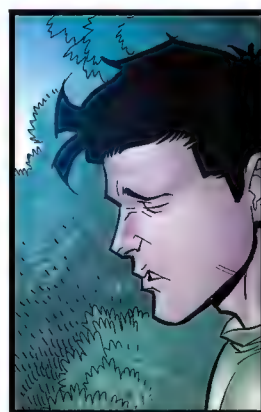
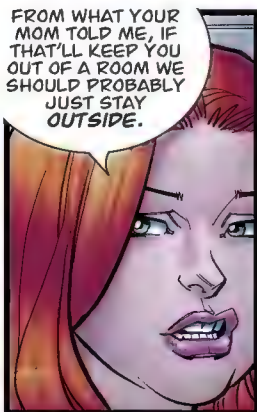
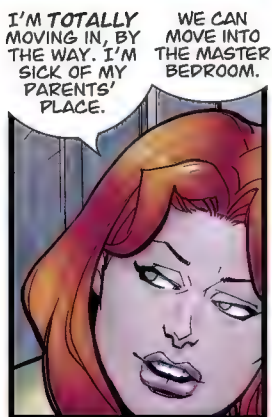
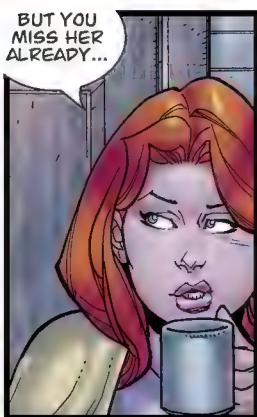
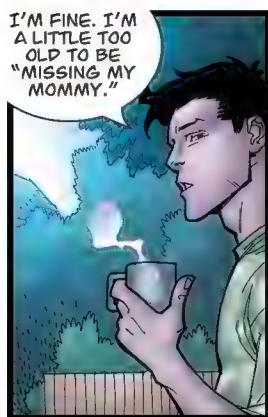
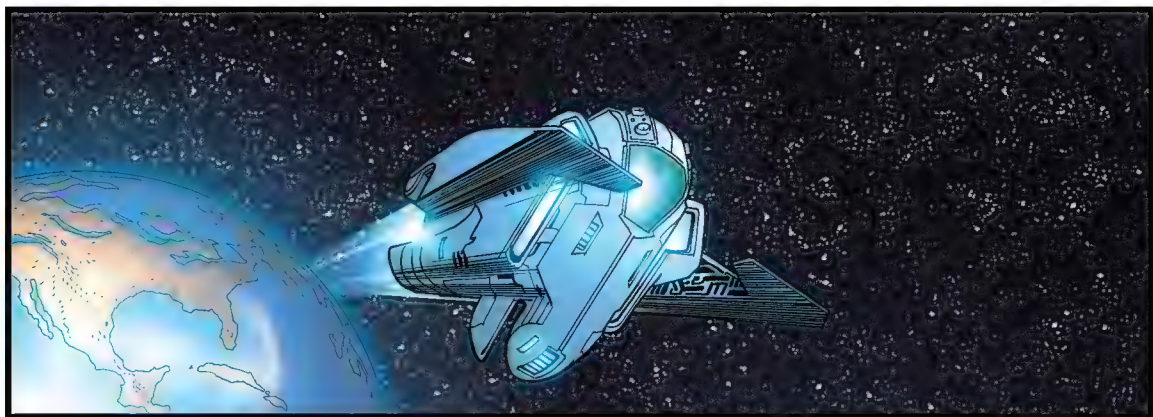


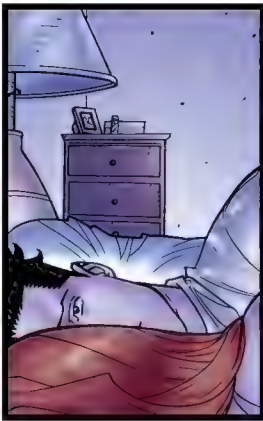
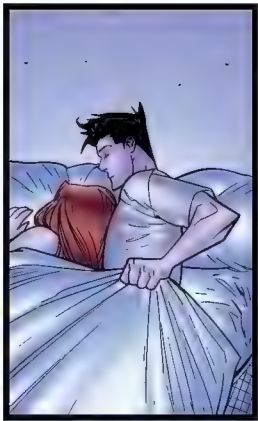
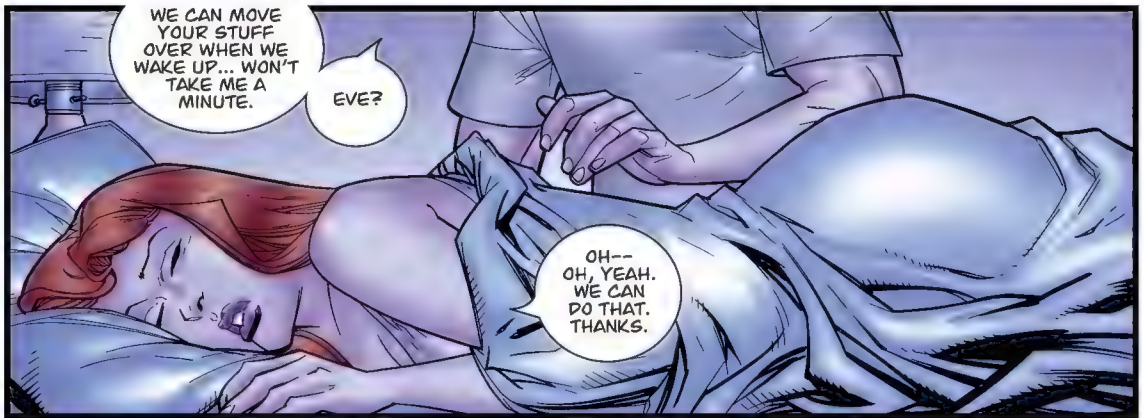
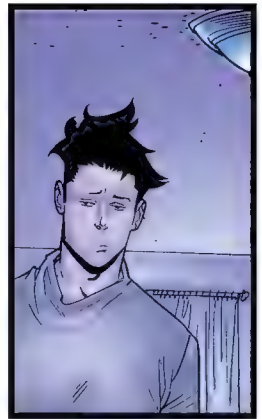
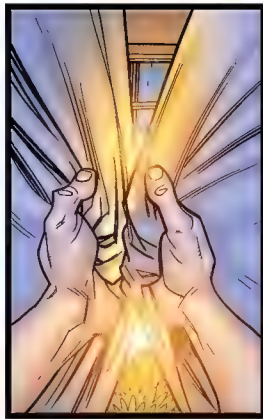
CHAPTER 80



Phan 10
80







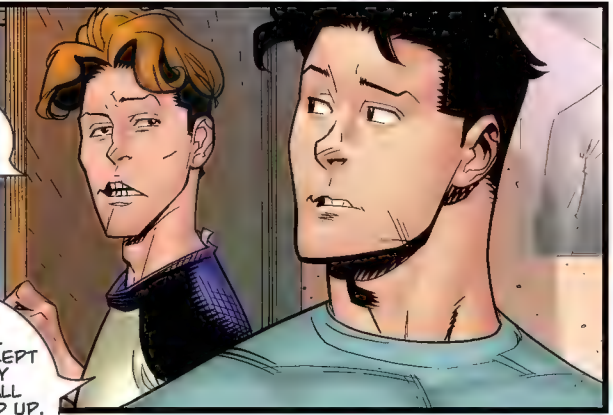


AND FINALLY YOU
COME TO VISIT.
UNANNOUNCED--
AND EXACTLY AT
DINNER TIME.

STILL,
IT'S GOOD
TO SEE YOU,
MARK.

IS IT
DINNER
TIME?
JEEZ!
SORRY.

EVE AND I
WERE UP ALL
NIGHT, SO WE SLEPT
TODAY AND MY
SCHEDULE IS ALL
KINDS OF MESSED UP.



UP ALL
NIGHT,
HUH?

I GUESS
YOU TWO
ARE GETTING
REACQUAINTED,
THEN.

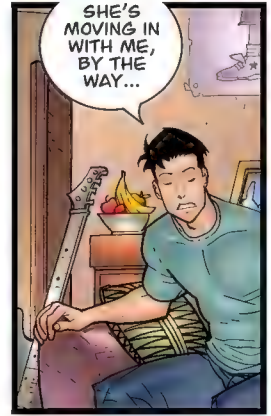


OH, HOW
I'VE MISSED
OUR LITTLE
TALKS,
WILLIAM.

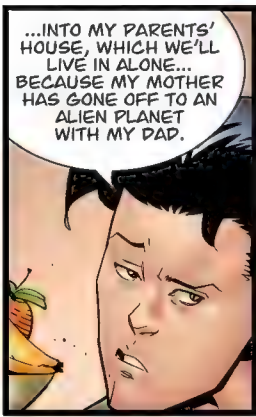


YEAH,
SORRY...
I COULDN'T
RESIST.

WHAT
BRINGS
YOU
HERE?



SHE'S
MOVING IN
WITH ME,
BY THE
WAY...



...INTO MY PARENTS'
HOUSE, WHICH WE'LL
LIVE IN ALONE...
BECAUSE MY MOTHER
HAS GONE OFF TO AN
ALIEN PLANET
WITH MY DAD.



BEING YOUR
FRIEND IS
LIKE, THE
COOLEST
THING
EVER.

IT'S ALWAYS
ALIEN PLANET
THIS AND END
OF THE WORLD
THAT. I'VE
REALLY
MISSED YOU,
MAN.

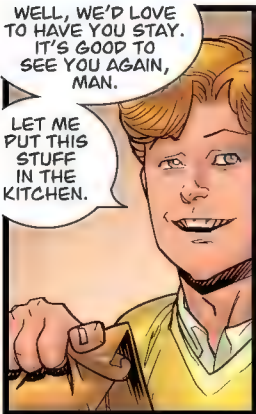


DINNER
IS SER--

OH,
WILLIAM--
I DIDN'T
KNOW WE WERE
HAVING
COMPANY.

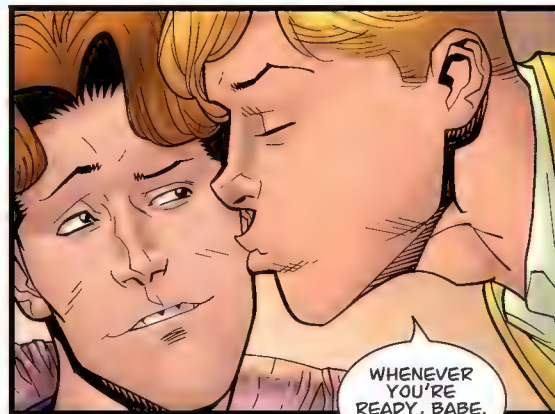


SORRY, RICK.
I JUST POPPED
IN FOR A MINUTE.
I CAN'T STAY
FOR DINNER
ANYWAY.



WELL, WE'D LOVE
TO HAVE YOU STAY.
IT'S GOOD TO
SEE YOU AGAIN,
MAN.

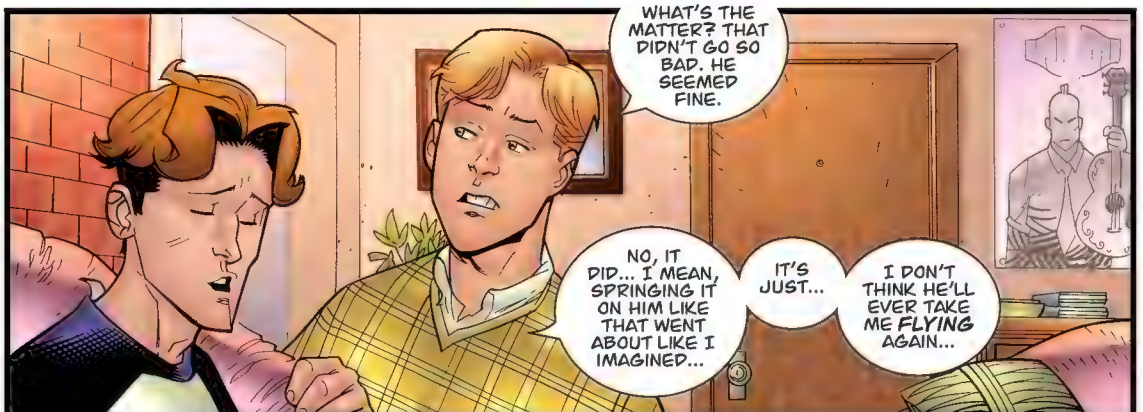
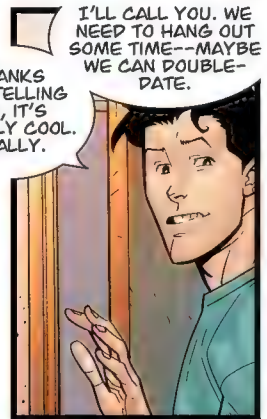
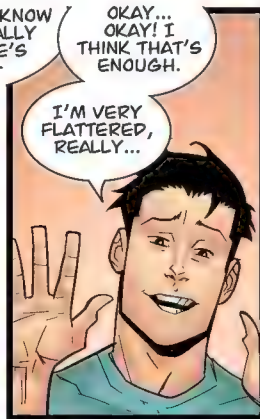
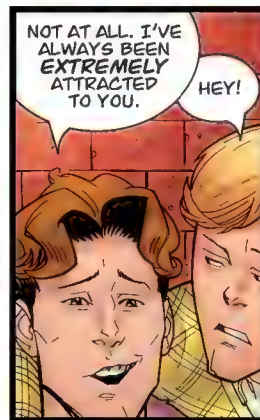
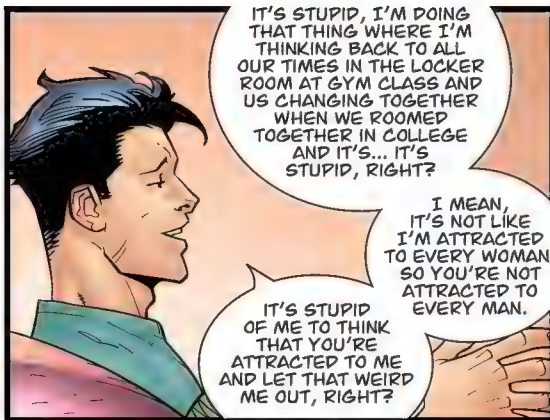
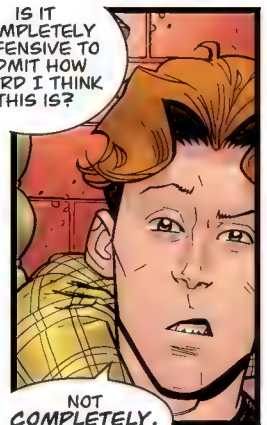
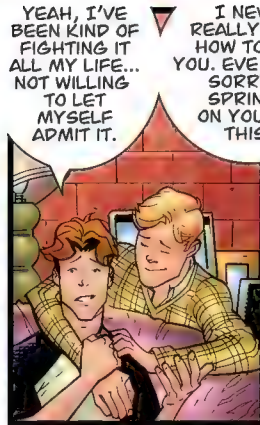
LET ME
PUT THIS
STUFF
IN THE
KITCHEN.

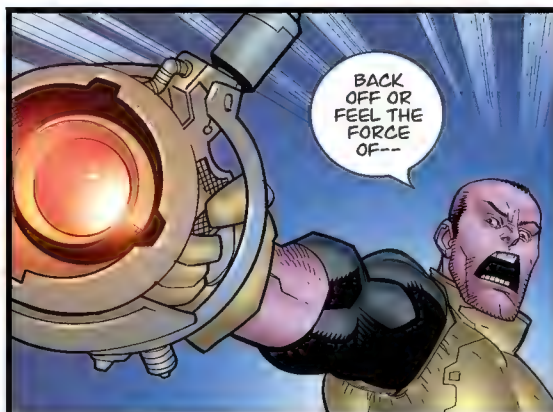
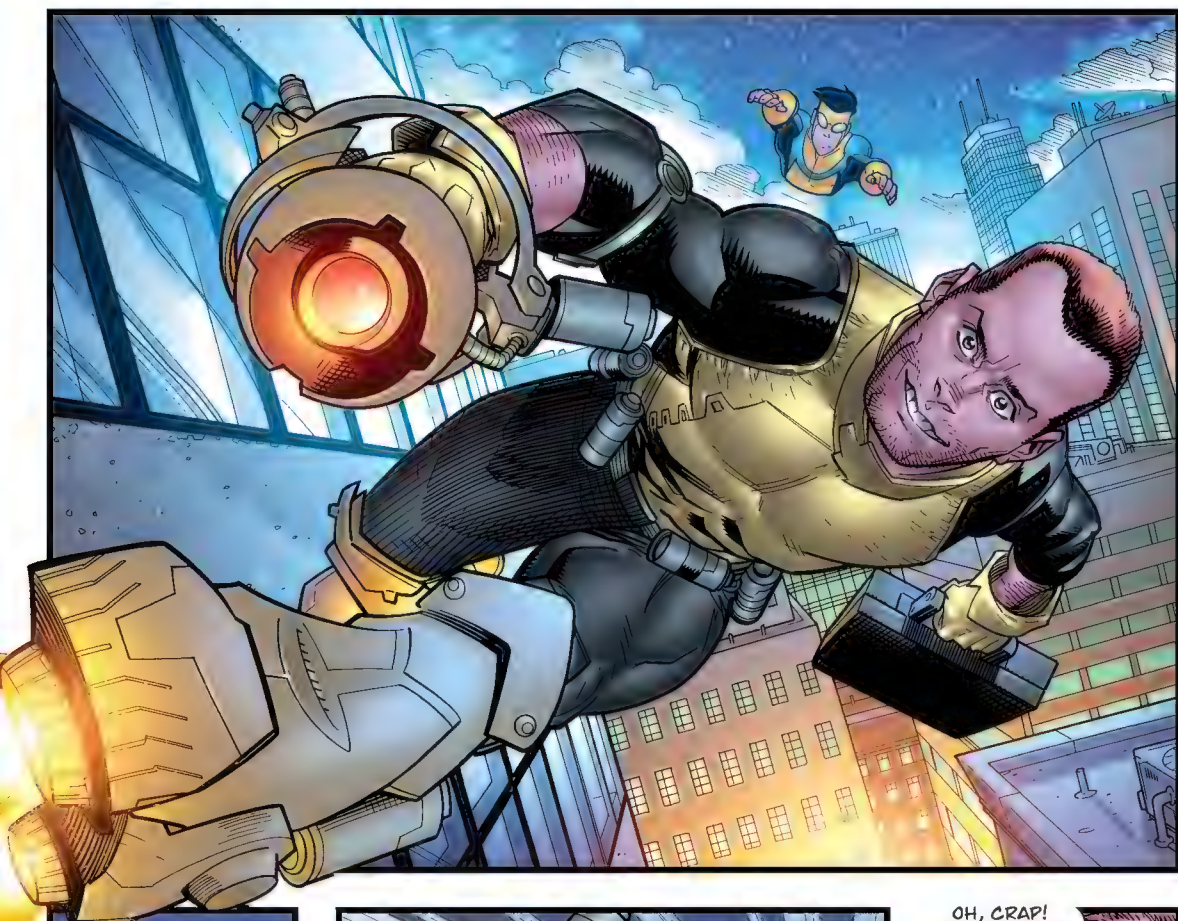


WHENEVER
YOU'RE
READY, BABE.



UH...
WHAT?







I CAN'T FIGHT YOU, I DON'T STAND A CHANCE. I THOUGHT I'D RUN INTO SOMEONE LIKE REX SPLODE, I COULD HANDLE THAT.

REX SPLODE IS DEAD.

JEEZ, I'M SORRY, I HAD NO IDEA. I... LOOK, I SURRENDER OKAY? JUST-- PLEASE DON'T PUNCH ME OR ANYTHING.

WELL, YOU SEEM LIKE A REASONABLE GUY... SO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME PUNCHING YOU.

BUT... WHAT EXACTLY WAS THAT THING YOU POINTED AT ME?

GRAVITY GUN. IT WORKS LIKE MY BOOTS, IT DISTORTS A GRAVITATIONAL FIELD AROUND THE AREA IT FIRES INTO. THE BOOTS ALLOW ME TO ALTER GRAVITY AROUND ME ESSENTIALLY PULLING ME TOWARD THE SURFACE MY BOOTS ARE ON--THE GUN SHOOTS A BEAM OF GRAVITY THAT PROPELS THINGS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

IT'S A PRETTY GOOD NON-LETHAL WEAPON-- PROBABLY WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU, THOUGH.

PROBABLY NOT. CAN I BE HONEST WITH YOU? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU DID. YOU DID DO SOMETHING WRONG, RIGHT?

I ROBBED A BANK, I'VE GOT TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND IN BONDS HERE.

IT WAS A CINCH WITH THE BOOTS, NOBODY SAW ME-- NO ONE LOOKS UP.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME. SO THE GETUP, NECESSARY INSIDE THE BANK, SURE--BUT OUTSIDE?

I MEAN, IF YOU'D JUST BEEN WALKING DOWN THE STREET WITH A BRIEFCASE, I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN NOTICED YOU.

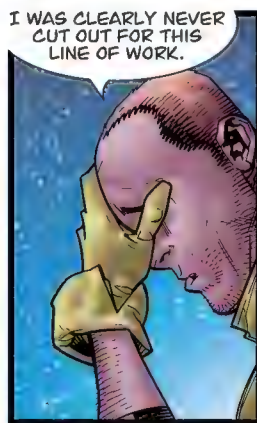
JUST SAYING.

WHERE WERE YOU WHEN I WAS PLANNING THIS JOB?

THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING.

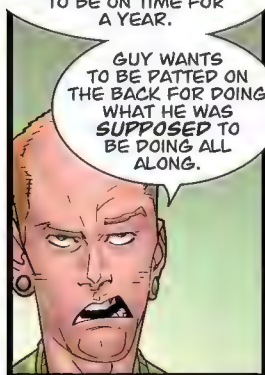
THIS IS JUST WEIRD, YOU'RE NOT EVEN FIGHTING BACK, YOU SEEM SO... REASONABLE.

WHY'D YOU DO IT? I'M CURIOUS.





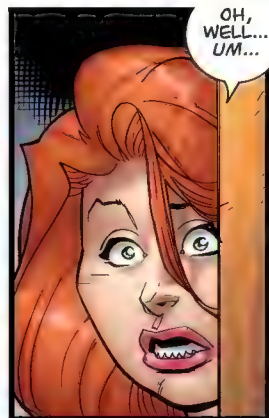
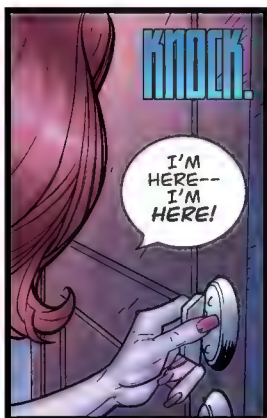
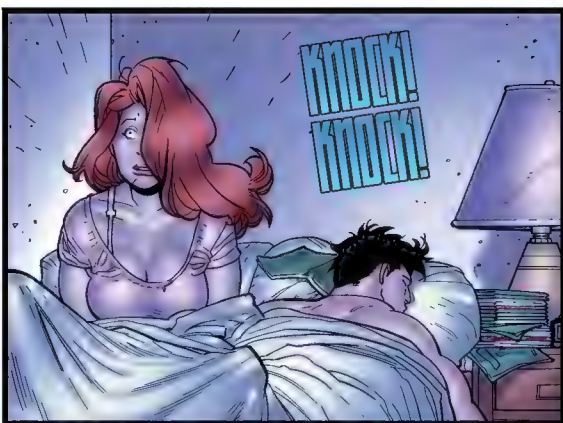
FILIP SCHAFF DID THIS THING WHERE HE PLEDGED TO BE ON TIME FOR A YEAR.

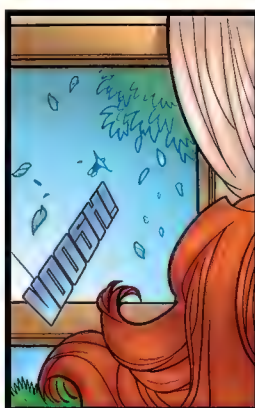
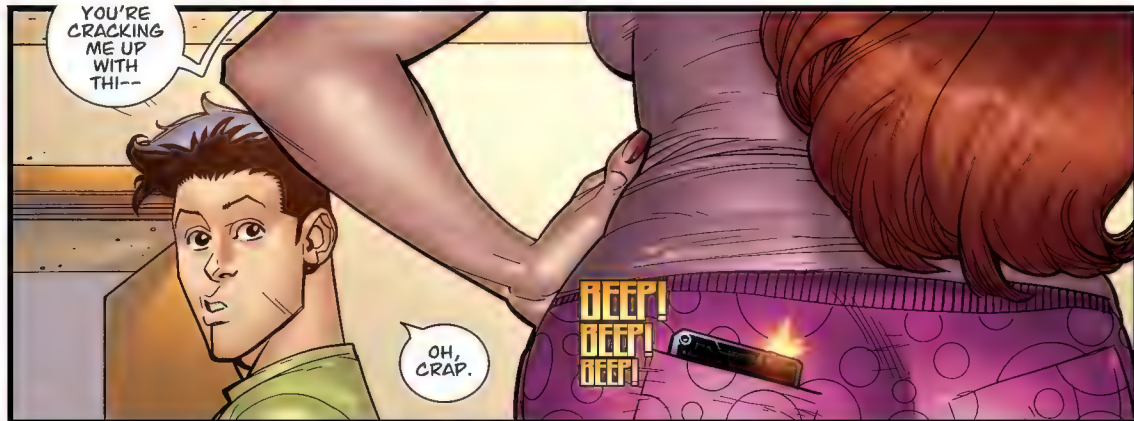
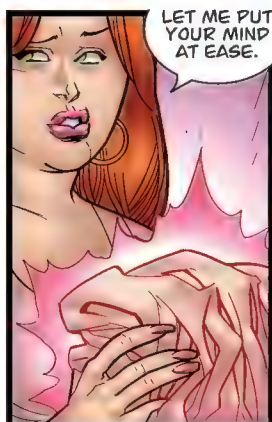
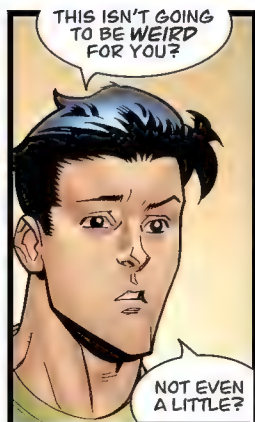
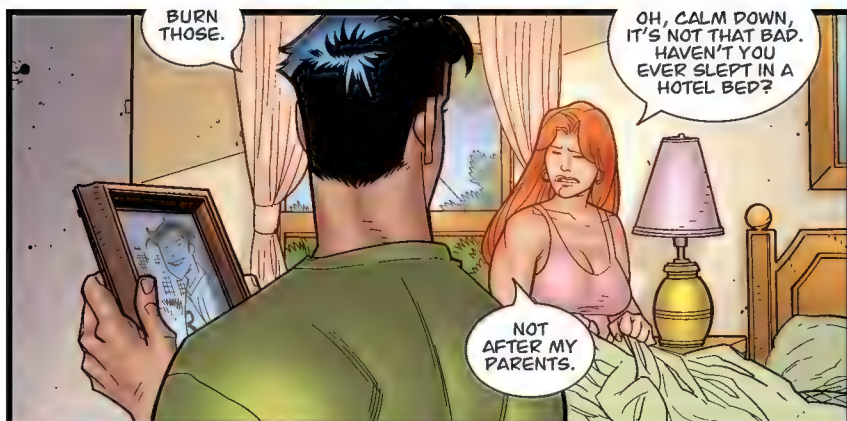


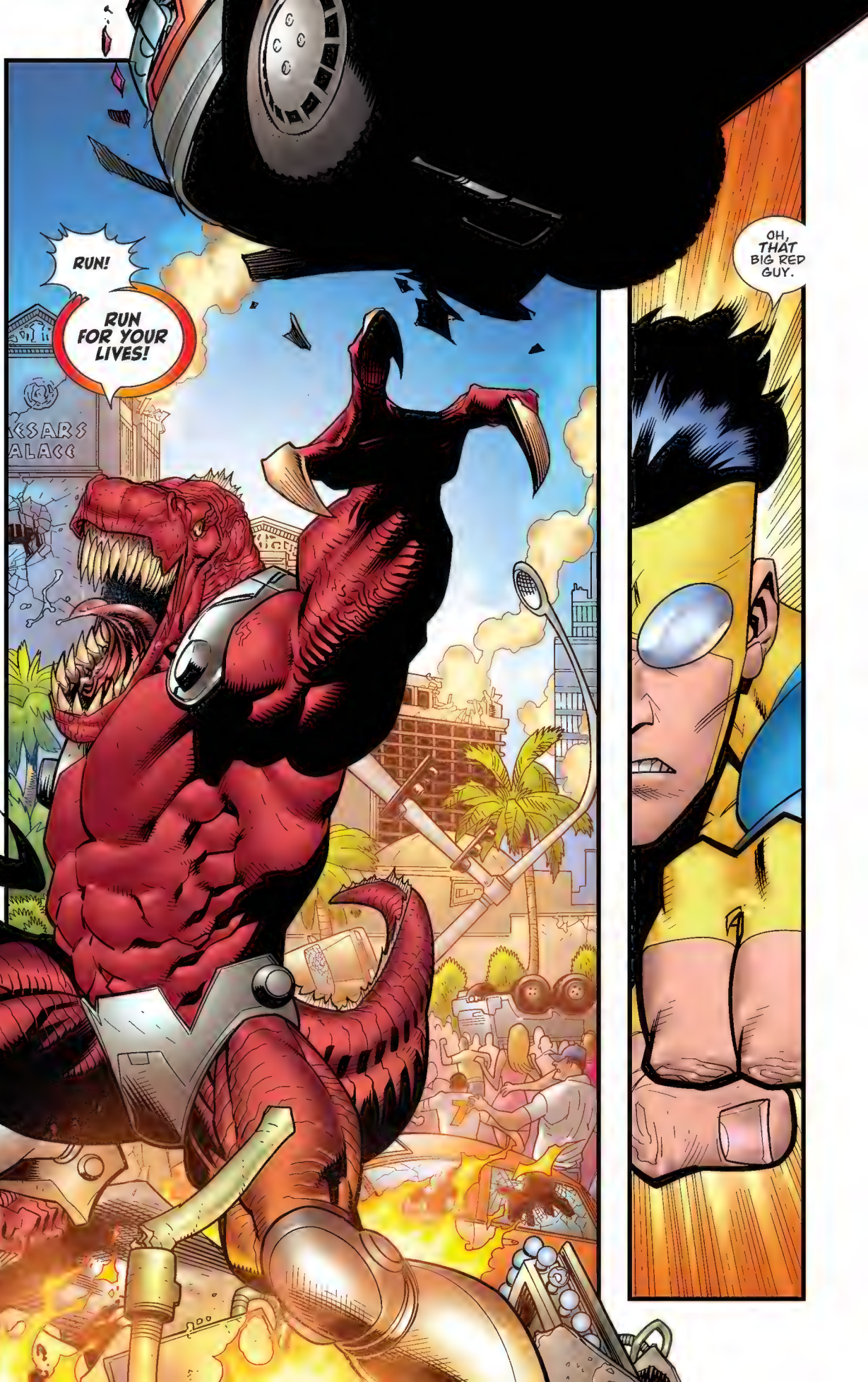
WHAT THE HECK? DID EVERY SERIES START OVER WITH A NEW ISSUE ONE? THAT BLOWS.

WHY DO THEY DO THAT? IT DOESN'T HELP SALES LONG TERM AND THEY ALWAYS JUST GO BACK TO THE NUMBERING FOR THE NEXT ANNIVERSARY ISSUE.





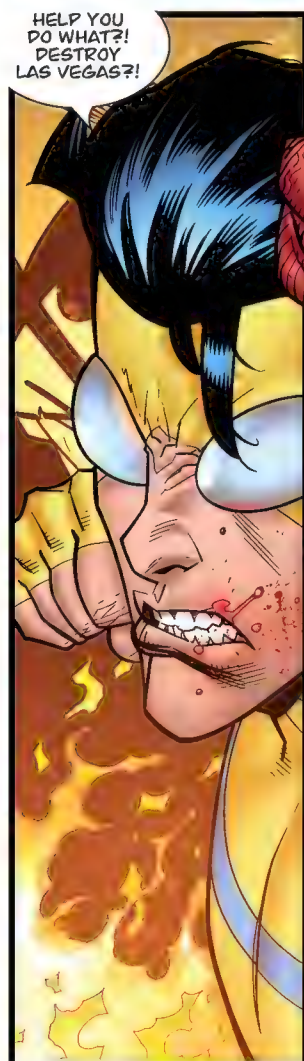


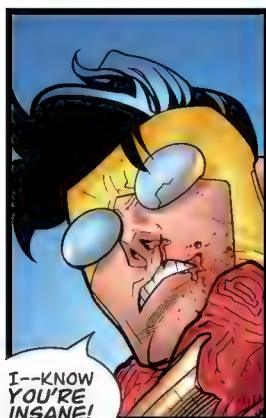
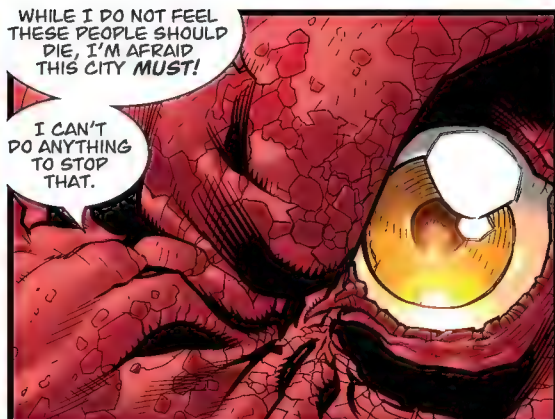
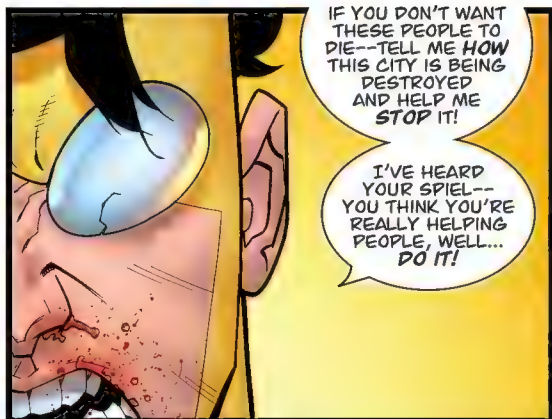


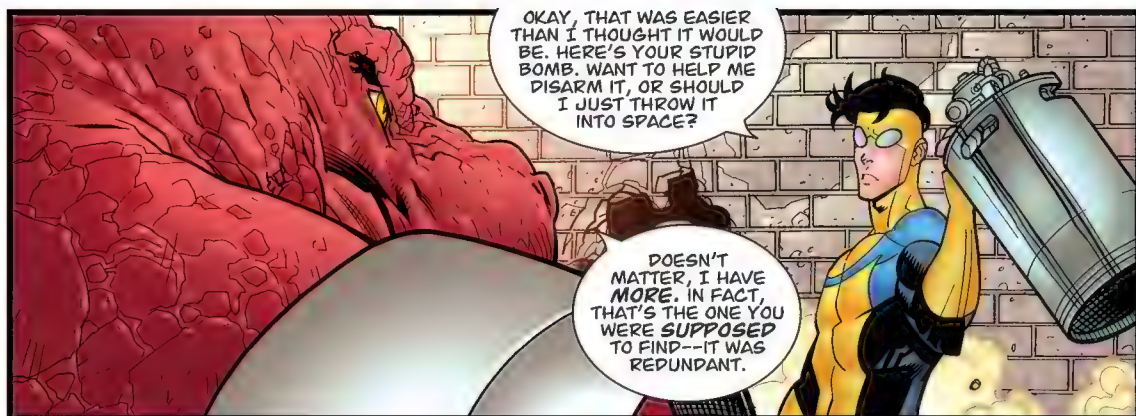
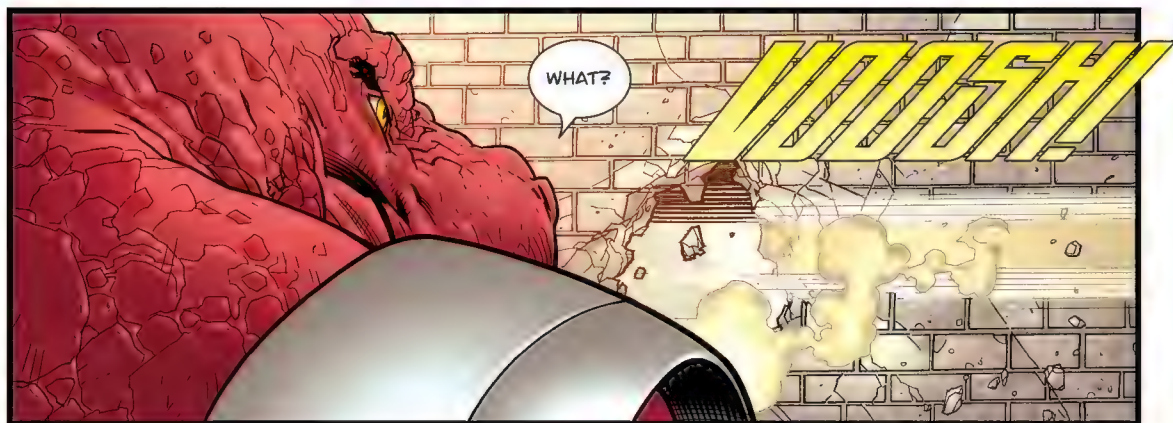
RUN!

**RUN
FOR YOUR
LIVES!**

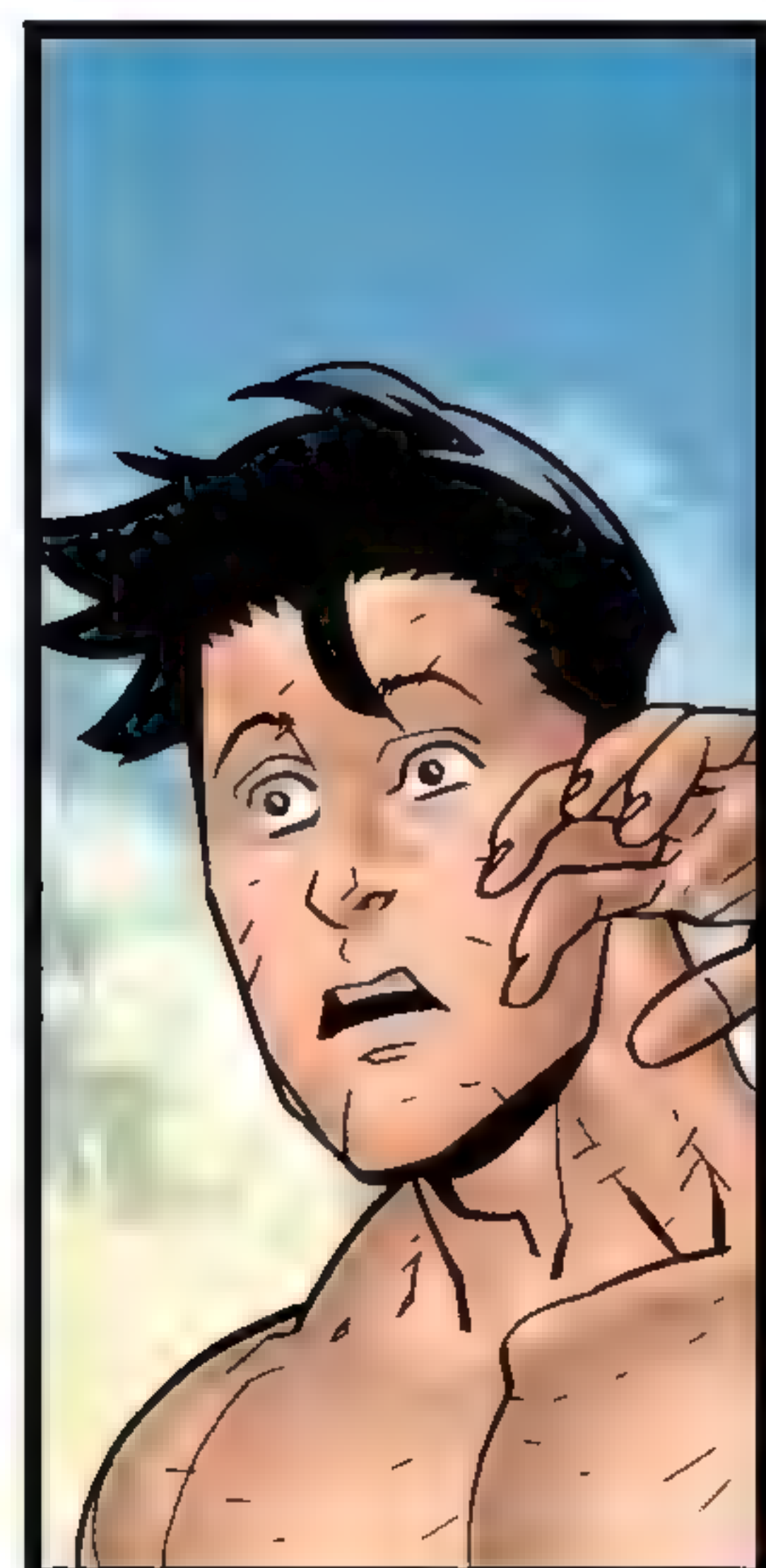
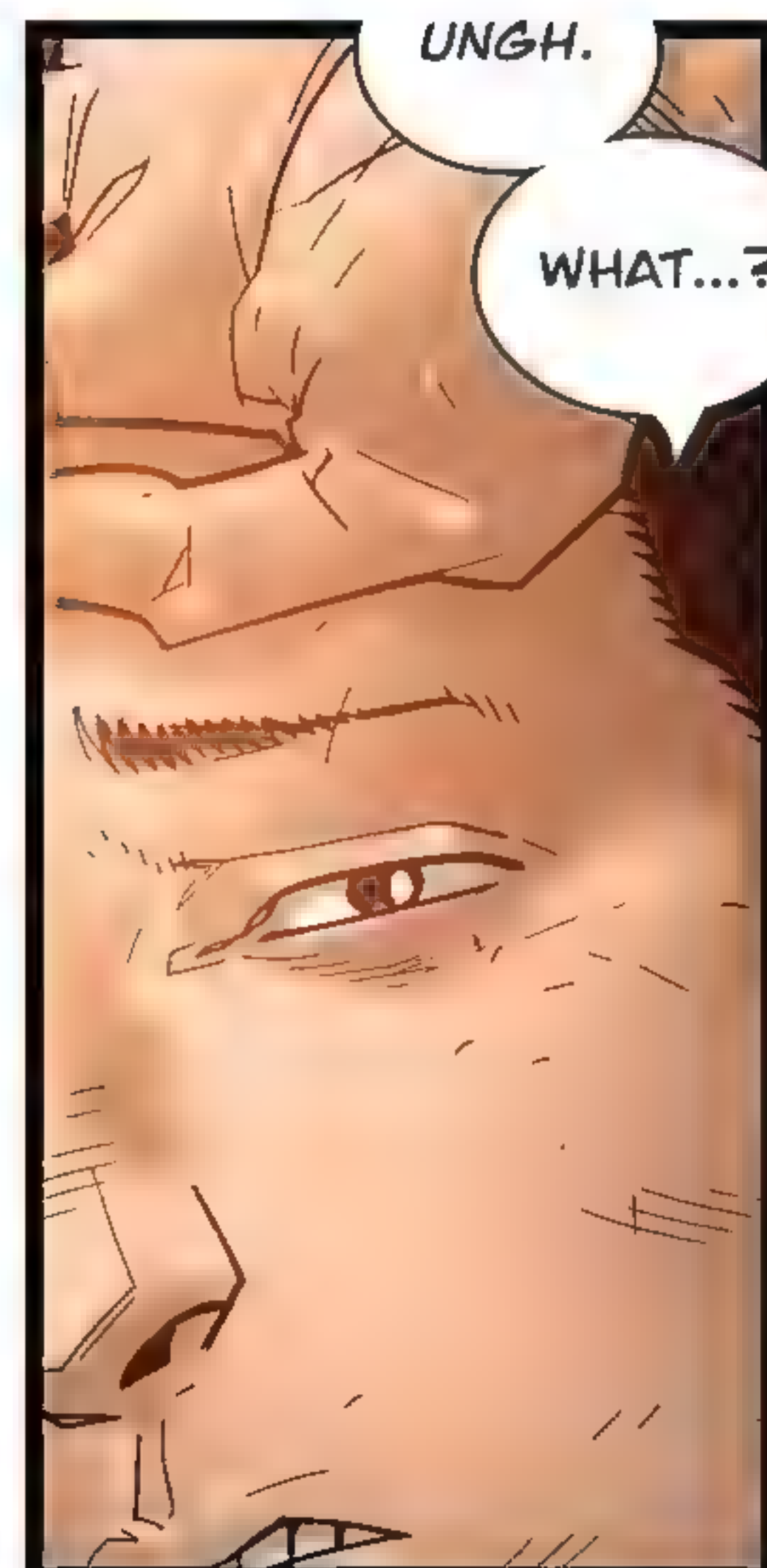
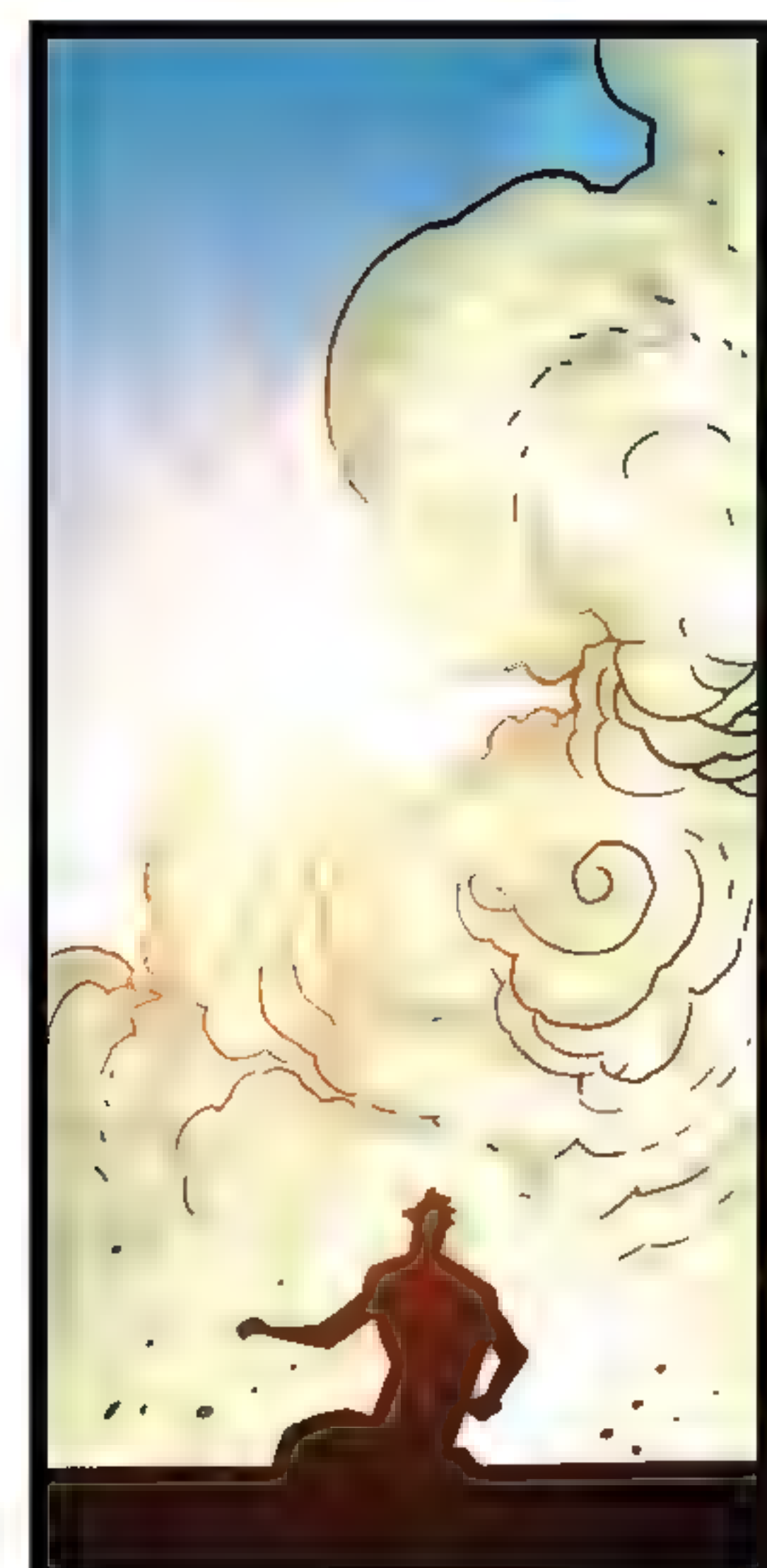
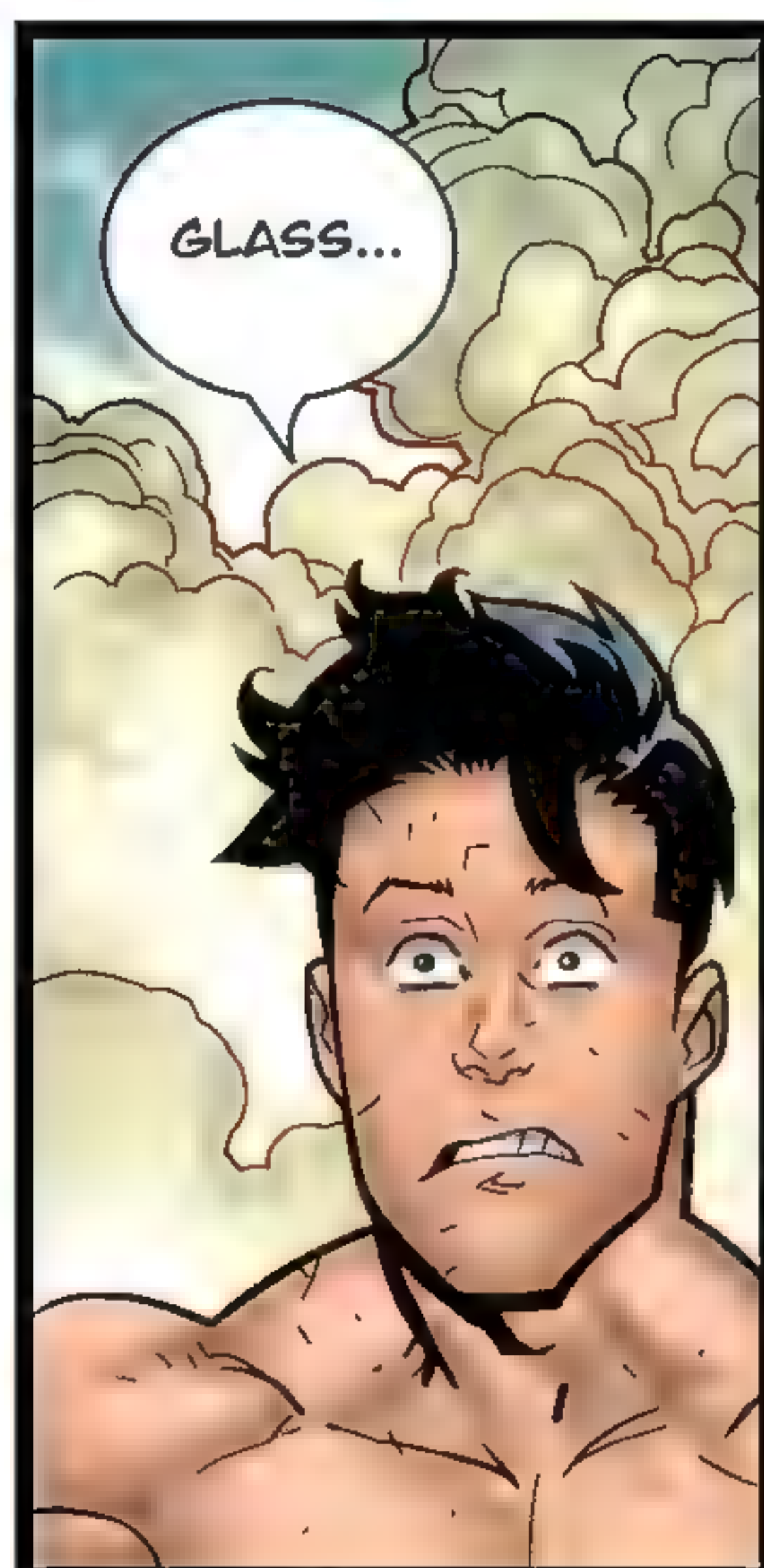
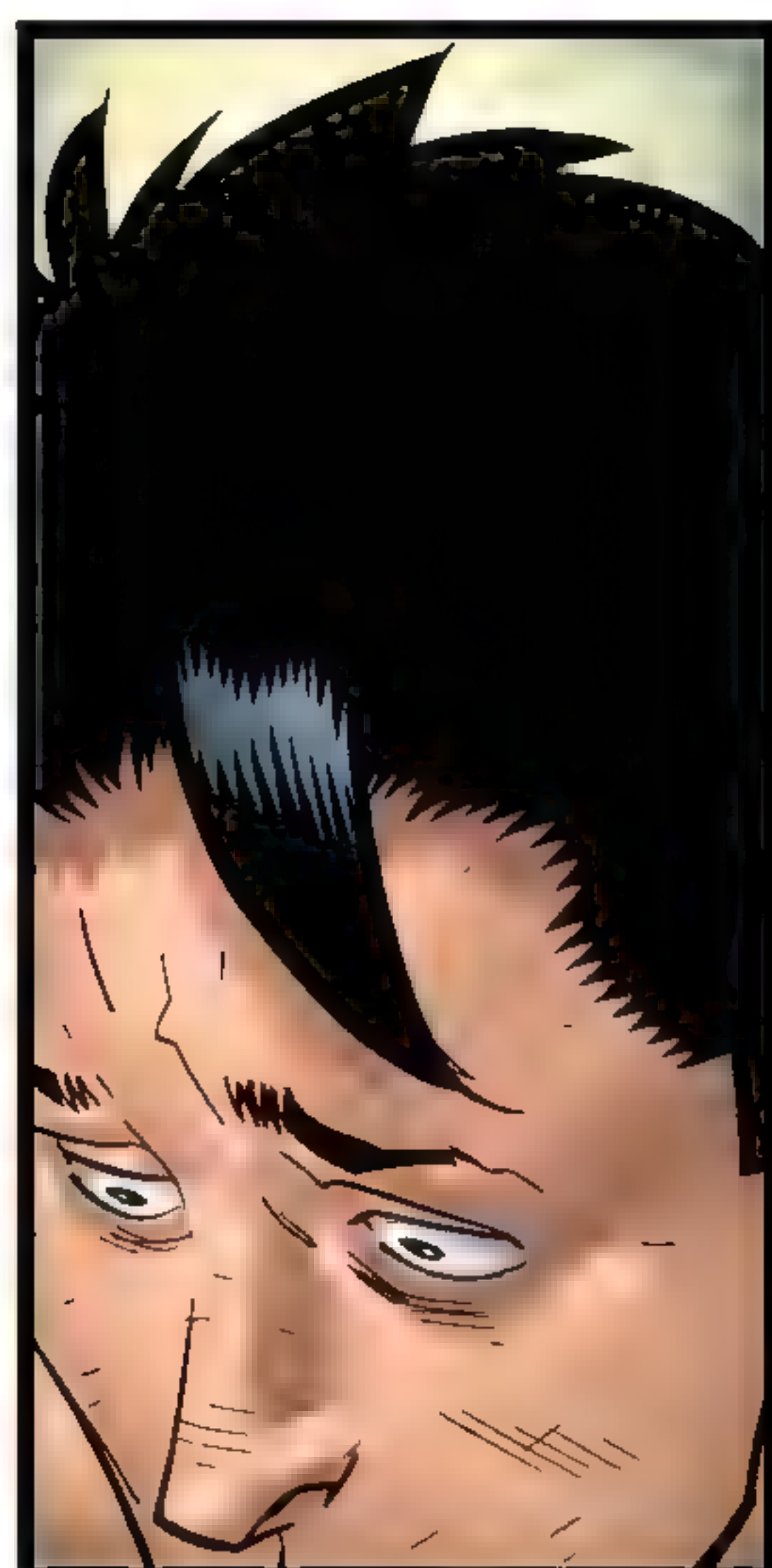
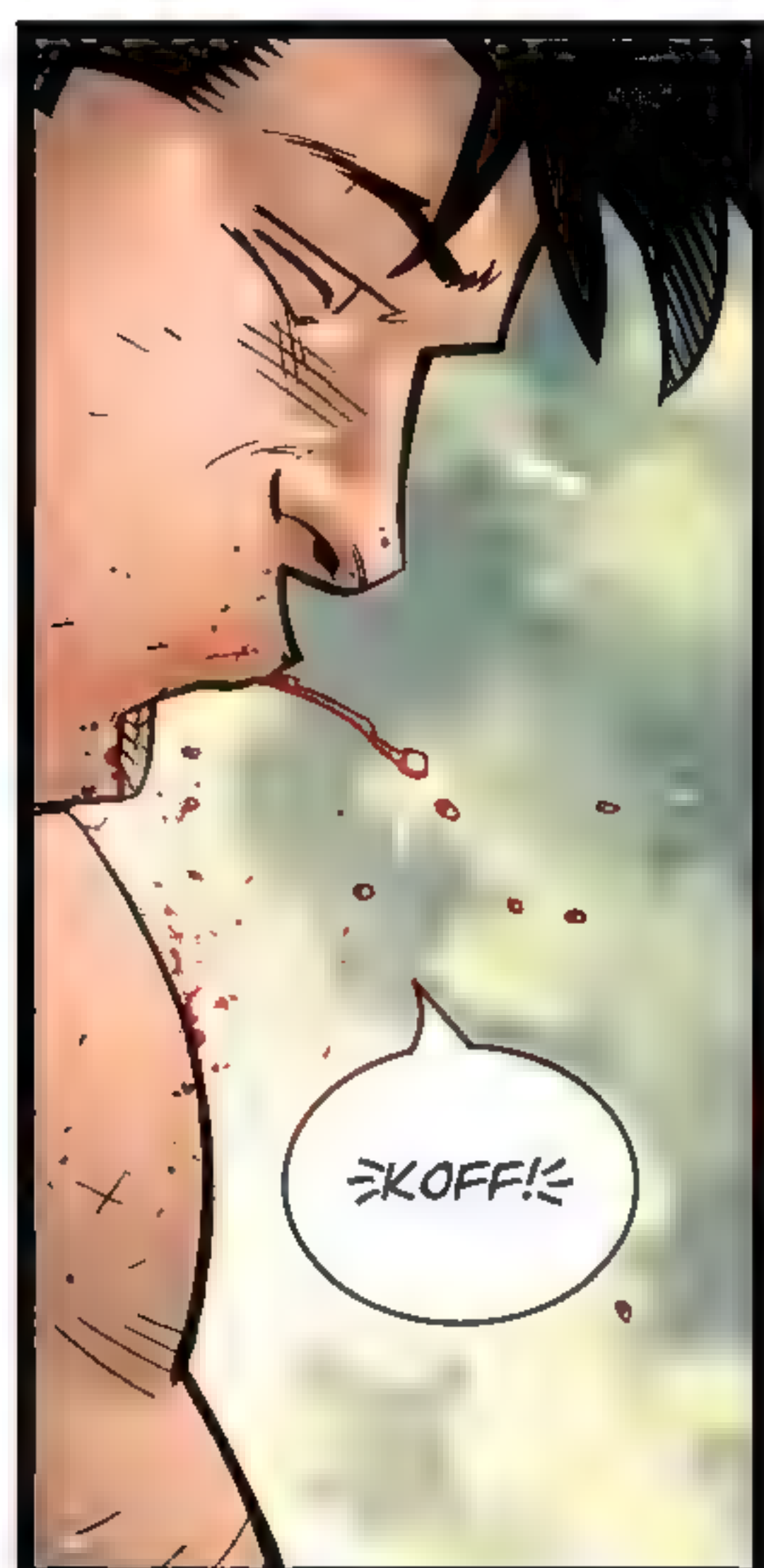
OH,
THAT
BIG RED
GUY.

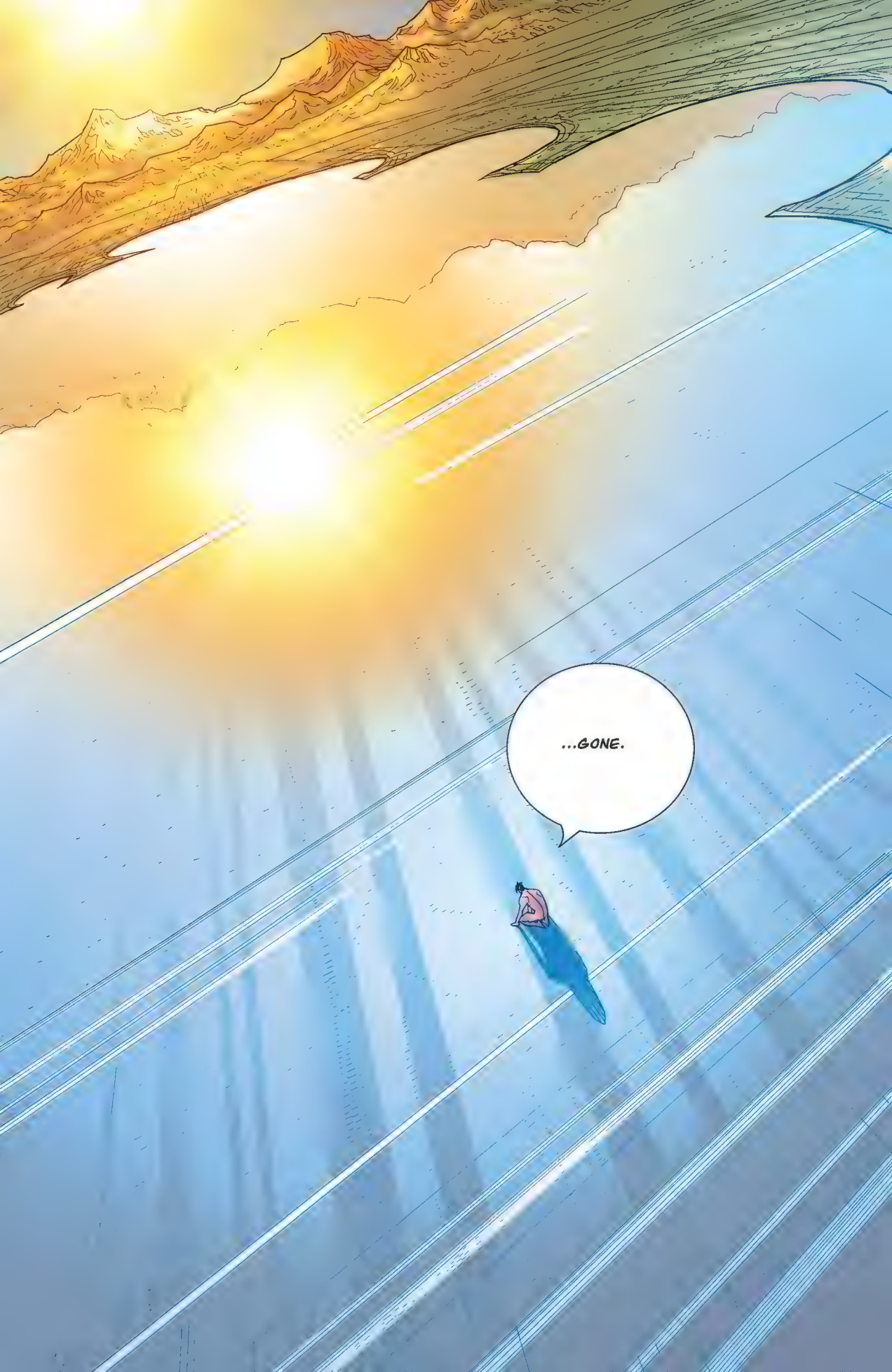












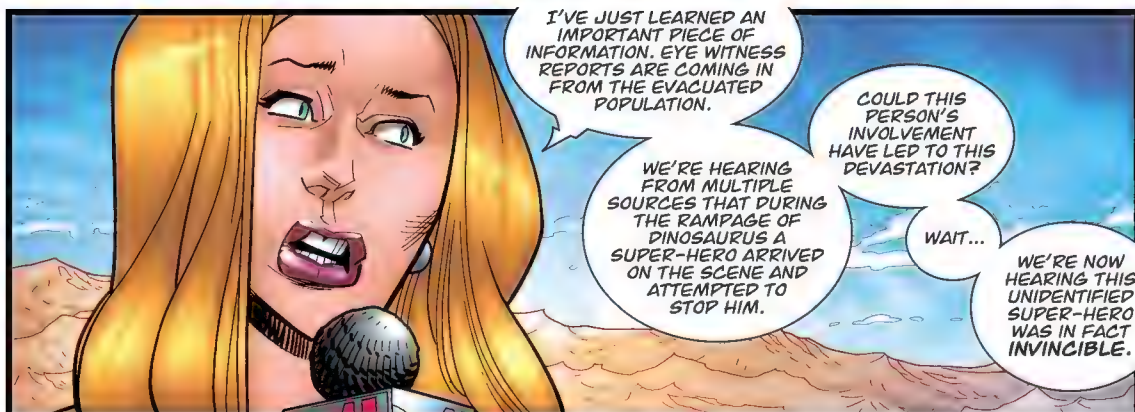
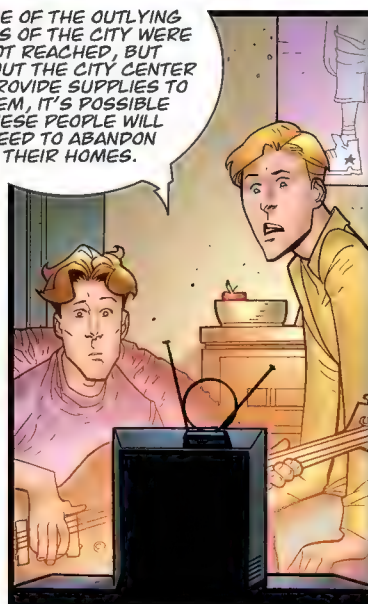
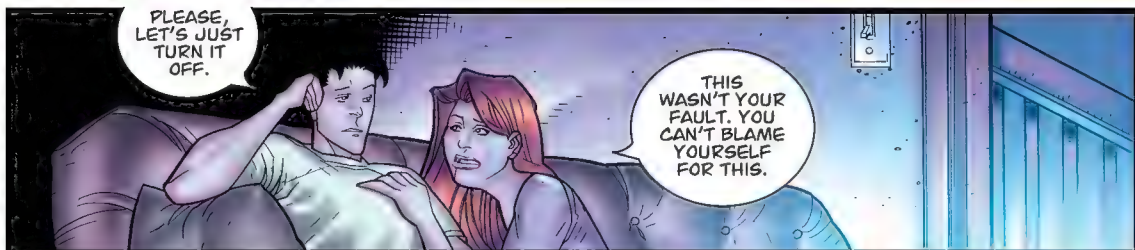
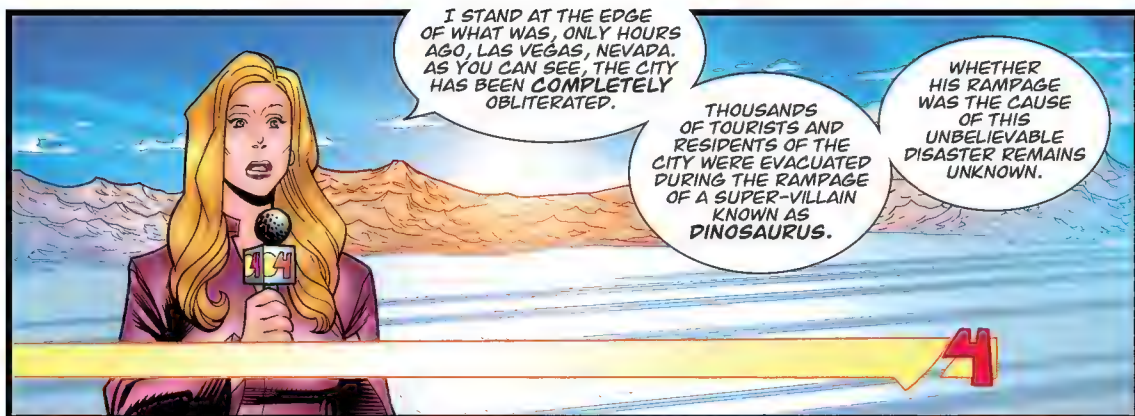
...GONE.



CHAPTER 81



PYAN



WHAT?!





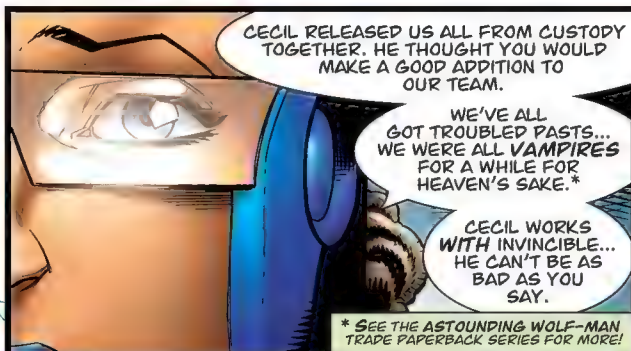
POWERPLEX,
PLEASE...
CALM DOWN.
THIS ISN'T
LIKE YOU
AT ALL.

I KNOW
YOUR HISTORY
WITH INVINCIBLE,
BUT THIS
JUST ISN'T
ACCEPTABLE
BEHAVIOR.

I KNOW... I'M
SORRY, KINETIC.
IT'S JUST, I WASN'T
READY FOR THIS.
WHEN INVINCIBLE
DISAPPEARED FOR
SO LONG, I
THOUGHT IT
WAS OVER.

I'M THANKFUL
THAT YOU GUYS
HAVE TAKEN ME IN,
ALLOWED ME TO JOIN
THE ACTIONEERS...
AND I'M REALLY
TRYING TO CONTROL
MYSELF.

I JUST...
WASN'T
PREPARED.
I'M SORRY IF
I STARTLED
YOU.

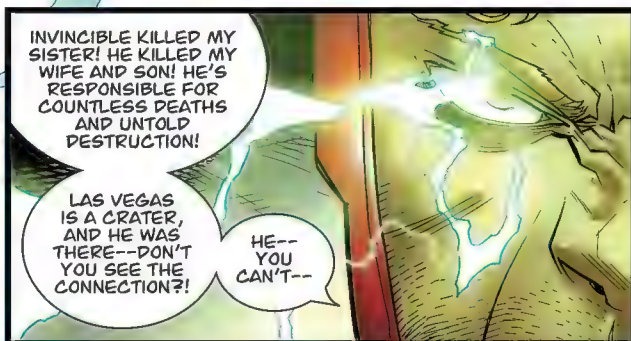


CECIL RELEASED US ALL FROM CUSTODY
TOGETHER. HE THOUGHT YOU WOULD
MAKE A GOOD ADDITION TO
OUR TEAM.

WE'VE ALL
GOT TROUBLED PASTS...
WE WERE ALL VAMPIRES
FOR A WHILE FOR
HEAVEN'S SAKE.*

CECIL WORKS
WITH INVINCIBLE...
HE CAN'T BE AS
BAD AS YOU
SAY.

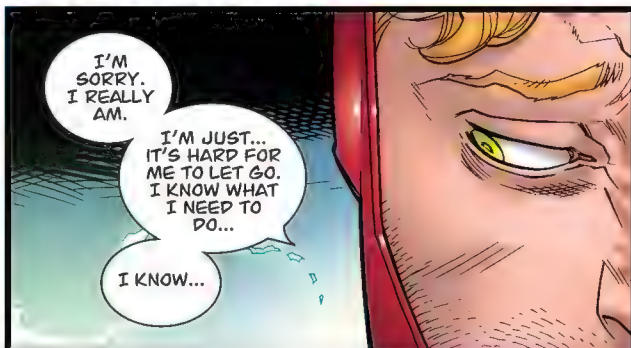
* SEE THE ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN
TRADE PAPERBACK SERIES FOR MORE!



INVINCIBLE KILLED MY
SISTER! HE KILLED MY
WIFE AND SON! HE'S
RESPONSIBLE FOR
COUNTLESS DEATHS
AND UNTOLD
DESTRUCTION!

LAS VEGAS
IS A CRATER,
AND HE WAS
THERE--DON'T
YOU SEE THE
CONNECTION?!

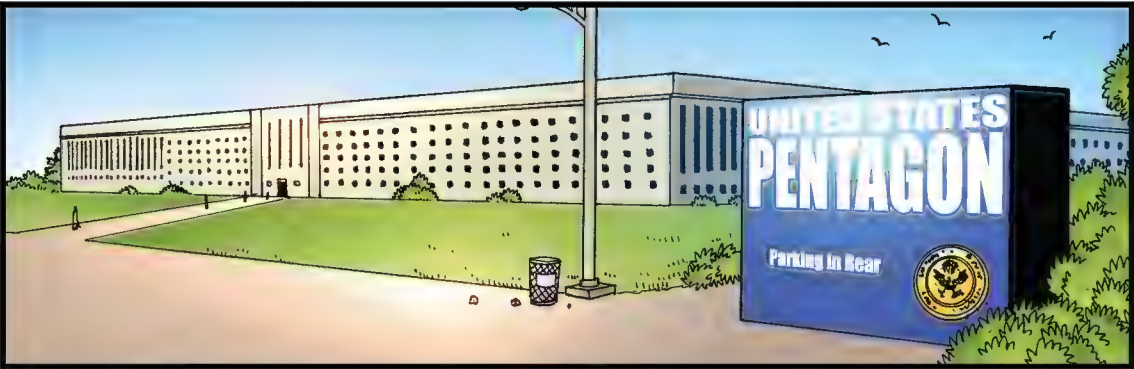
HE--
YOU CAN'T--



I'M
SORRY.
I REALLY
AM.

I'M JUST...
IT'S HARD FOR
ME TO LET GO.
I KNOW WHAT
I NEED TO
DO...

I KNOW...





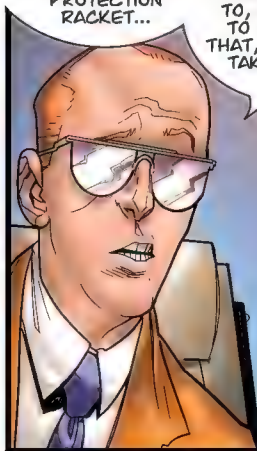
THE KID'S HAVING A HARD TIME WITH THIS ONE... YOU CAN SEE IT IN HIS EYES.

YOU'LL FEEL LESS SORRY FOR HIM WHEN YOU'VE BEEN **CHOKED** BY HIM AS MANY TIMES AS I HAVE.

LET HIM SUFFER... HE COULD USE A LITTLE HUMILITY.

THE FACT REMAINS, HE'S A ROGUE ELEMENT. HIS LITTLE SIDE BUSINESS WITH ATOM EYE, HIS SUPERHERO PROTECTION RACKET...

...IF THIS IS THE KIND OF THING IT LEADS TO, WE NEED TO MANAGE THAT, POSSIBLY TAKE OVER.



ARE WE REALLY ENTERTAINING FOR A SECOND THAT THIS WAS IN SOME WAY HIS FAULT?

HAVE YOU SEEN MY MISSION LOGS? I'VE BEEN PRESENT FOR AT LEAST THREE CITY DESTRUCTIONS IN THE PAST--I'VE STILL GOT A SEAT AT THE TABLE.

ARE YOU GUYS BLAMING ME FOR PARIS?*

*SEE GUARDING THE GLOBE, VOLUME ONE!



NO, AND OF COURSE I DON'T ACTUALLY BLAME INVINCIBLE FOR LAS VEGAS.

PARIS... VEGAS... THE FACT IS IT REFLECTS POORLY ON US. WE NEED TO BE BETTER ORGANIZED. THE ORDER, THIS MANIAC DINOSAURUS... OUR OPPONENTS ARE GETTING BETTER...



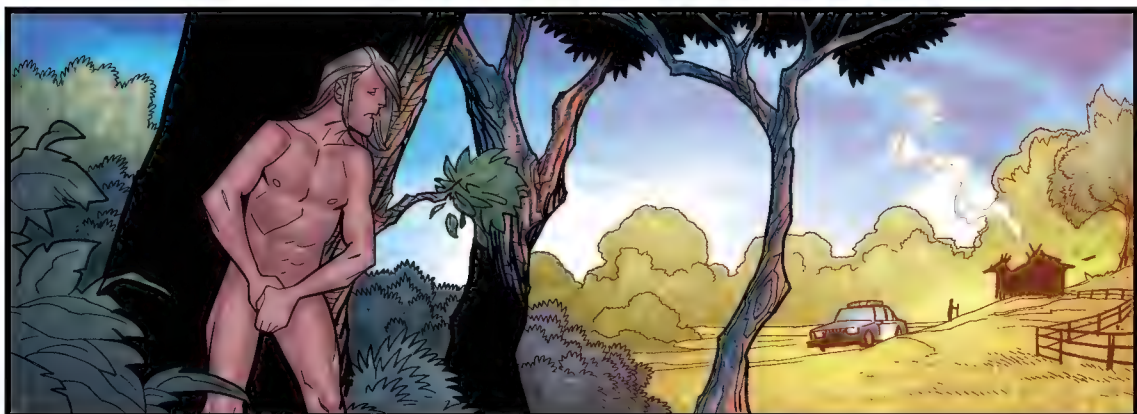
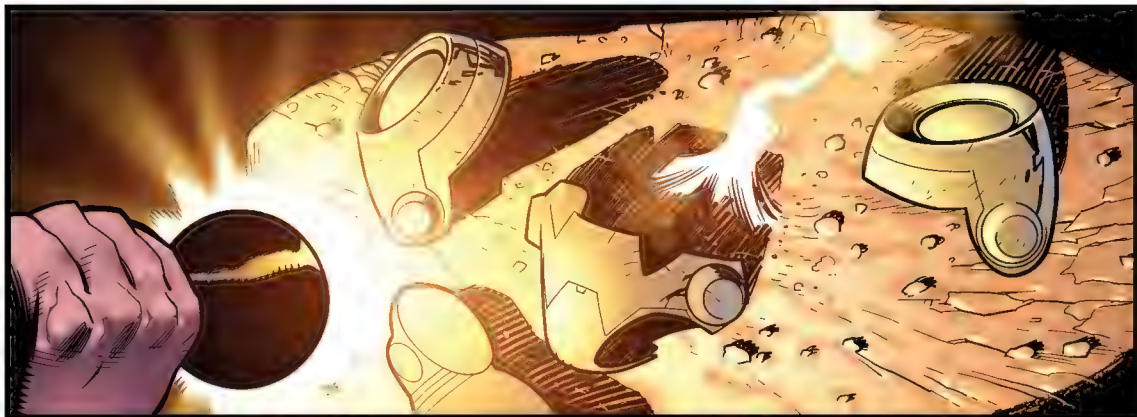
WE HAVE TO GET BETTER.

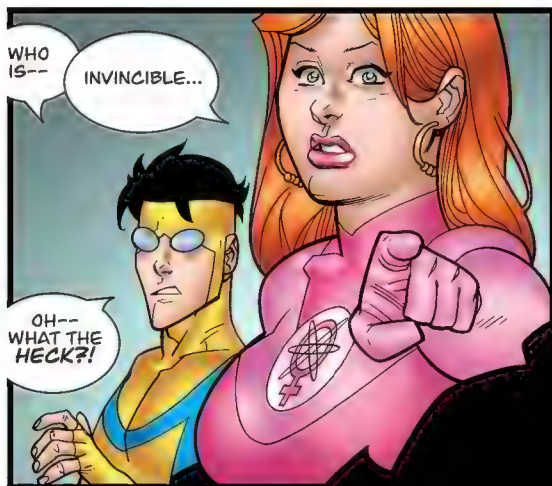
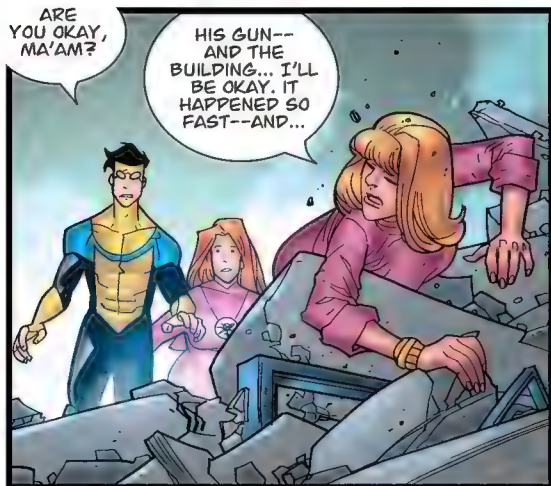
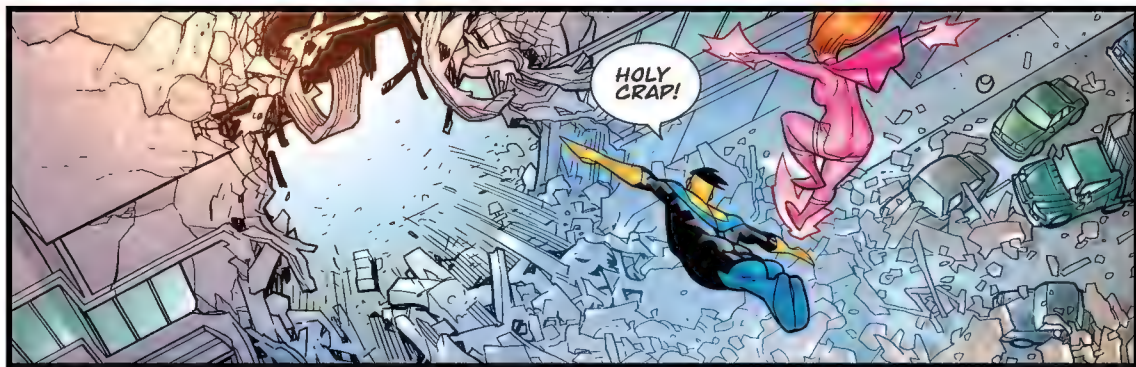
ON THIS DINOSAURUS CHARACTER... I DO NOT BUY THAT HE WAS VAPORIZED IN THE EXPLOSION-- HE CAN HOLD HIS OWN AGAINST INVINCIBLE... I'M CALLING IT RIGHT NOW.

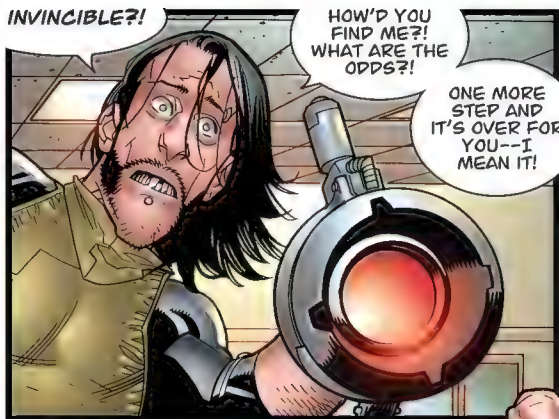
HE SURVIVED.

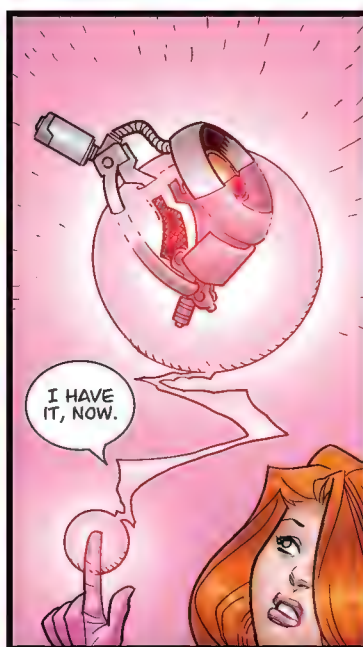
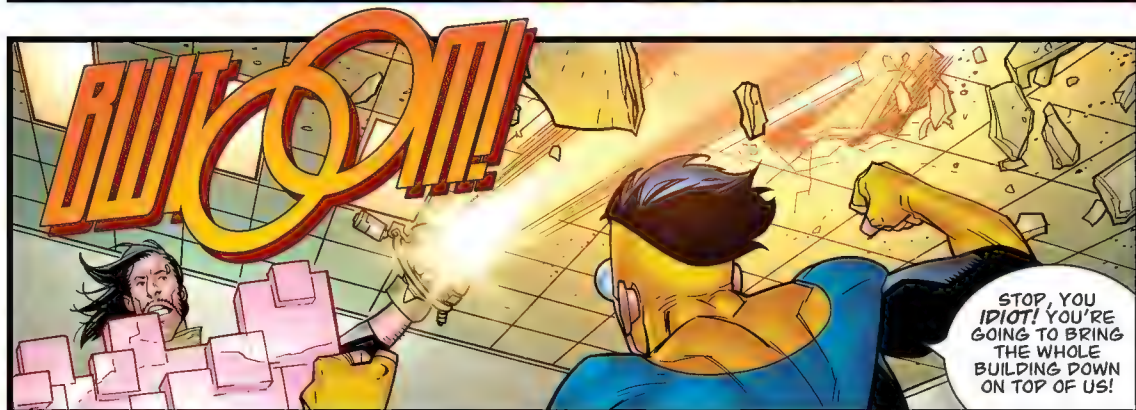
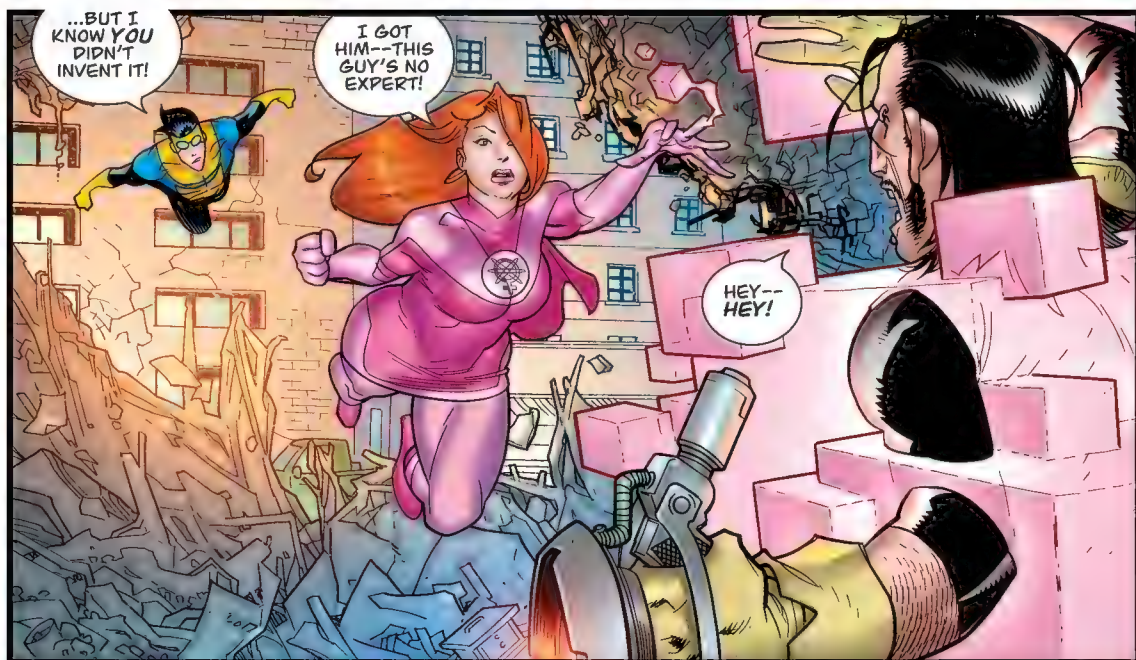
WE NEED TO FIND HIM BEFORE HE STRIKES AGAIN.

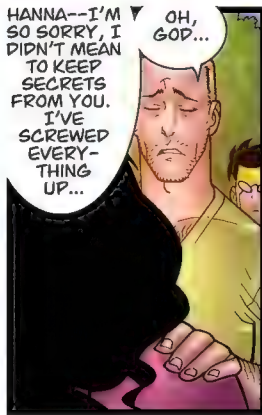
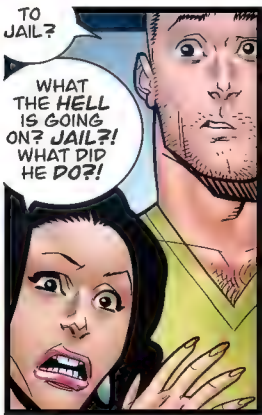


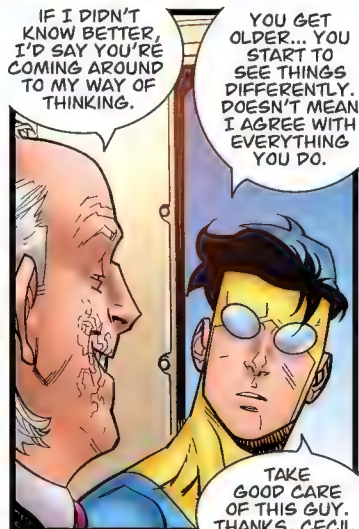
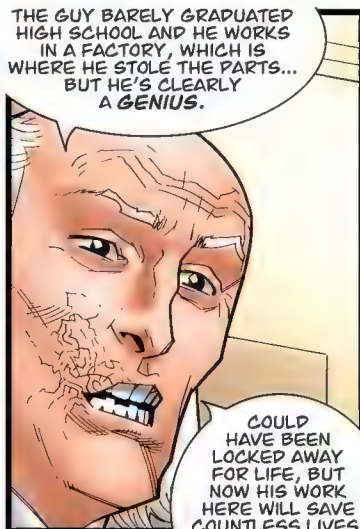
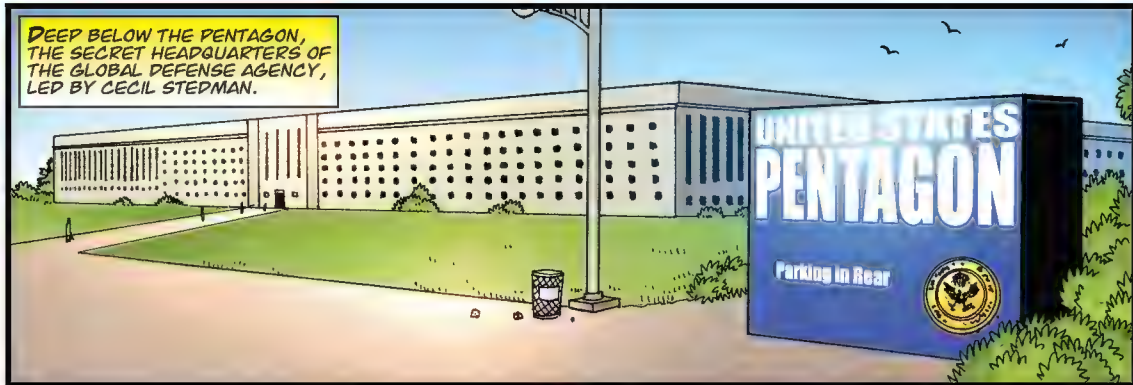


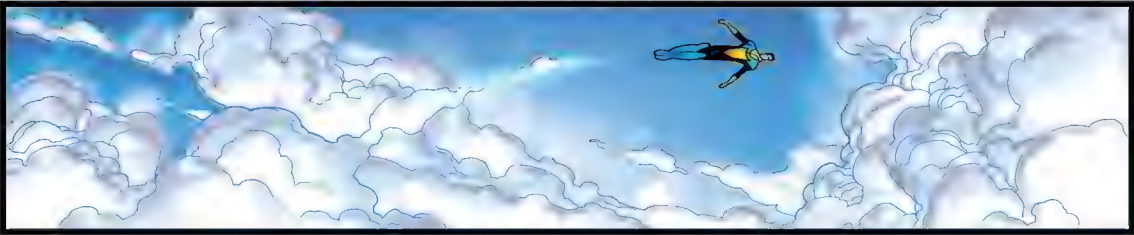














WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE STAYED IN SPACE?! THINGS WERE SO MUCH BETTER WITHOUT YOU HERE!

I WAS GETTING MY LIFE IN ORDER... DEALING WITH BECKY AND JACK'S DEATH... I WAS COPING--DOING SOME GOOD EVEN.

I WAS RELEASED, I JOINED THE ACTIONEERS!



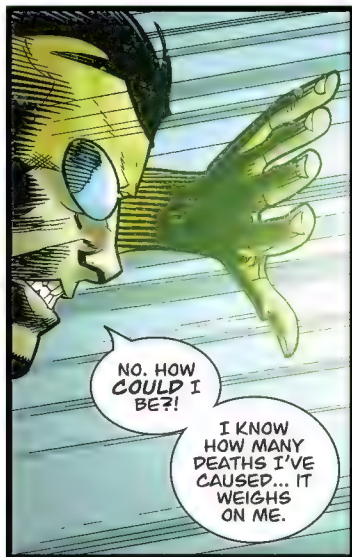
THANKS FOR THE UPDATE?

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY?



LAS VEGAS!

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TO DIE BEFORE YOU SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?! ARE YOU REALLY OBLIVIOUS TO THE DESTRUCTION YOU CAUSE?



NO. HOW COULD I BE?!

I KNOW HOW MANY DEATHS I'VE CAUSED... IT WEIGHS ON ME.

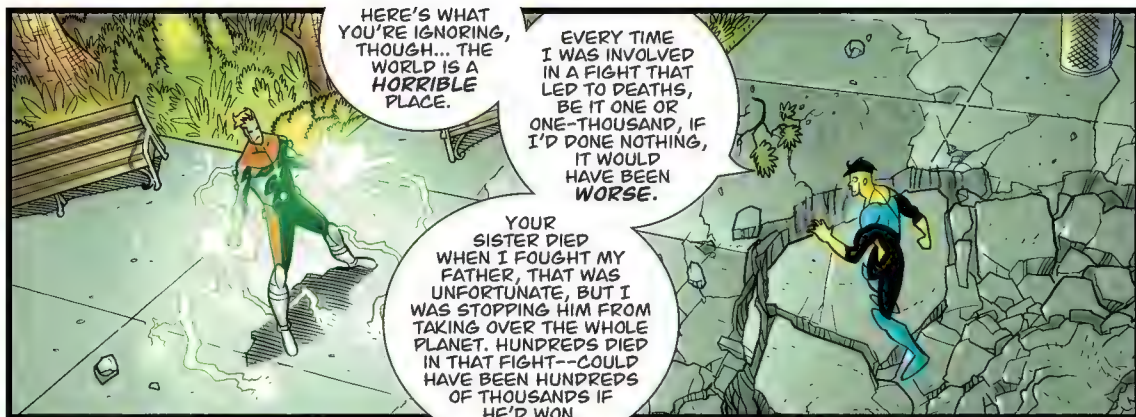


WHAT?



DO YOU THINK I'M STUPID? OR CRAZY? I'M NOT EVIL.

NOT A DAY GOES BY THAT I DON'T THINK ABOUT IT.



HERE'S WHAT YOU'RE IGNORING, THOUGH... THE WORLD IS A HORRIBLE PLACE.

EVERY TIME I WAS INVOLVED IN A FIGHT THAT LED TO DEATHS, BE IT ONE OR ONE-THOUSAND, IF I'D DONE NOTHING, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WORSE.

YOUR SISTER DIED WHEN I FOUGHT MY FATHER, THAT WAS UNFORTUNATE, BUT I WAS STOPPING HIM FROM TAKING OVER THE WHOLE PLANET. HUNDREDS DIED IN THAT FIGHT--COULD HAVE BEEN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS IF HE'D WON.



YOU LIE!



ACK!

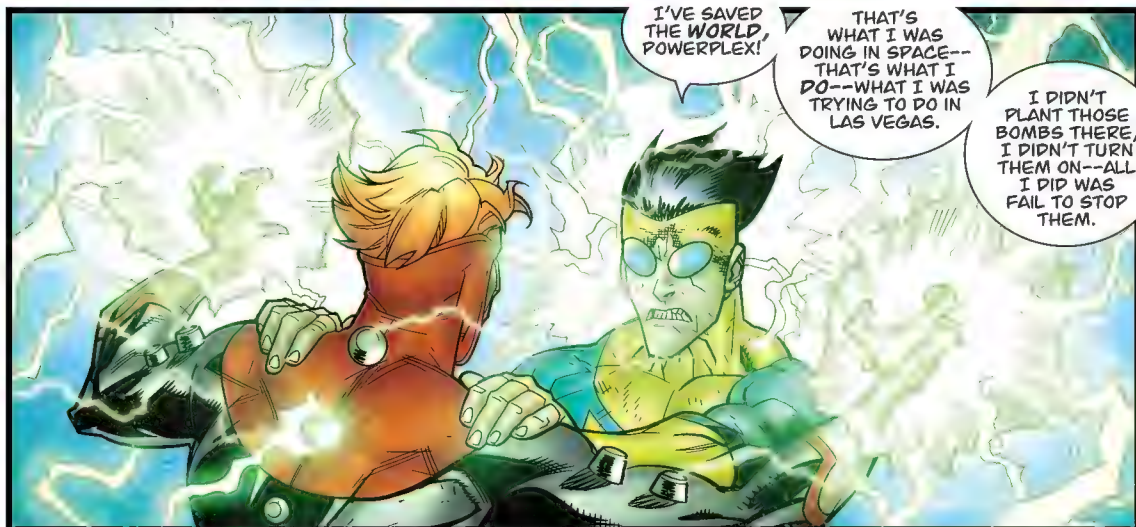
I'M NOT--LYING--AND I'M--NOT GOING TO FIGHT YOU--I KNOW HOW YOU ABSORB ENERGY.



COUNTLESS DEATHS ARE THE RESULT OF YOUR BATTLES! I REFUSE TO BELIEVE THINGS WOULDN'T BE BETTER WITHOUT YOU!

YOU'RE RECKLESS, SLOPPY-- YOU MAKE SITUATIONS WORSE!

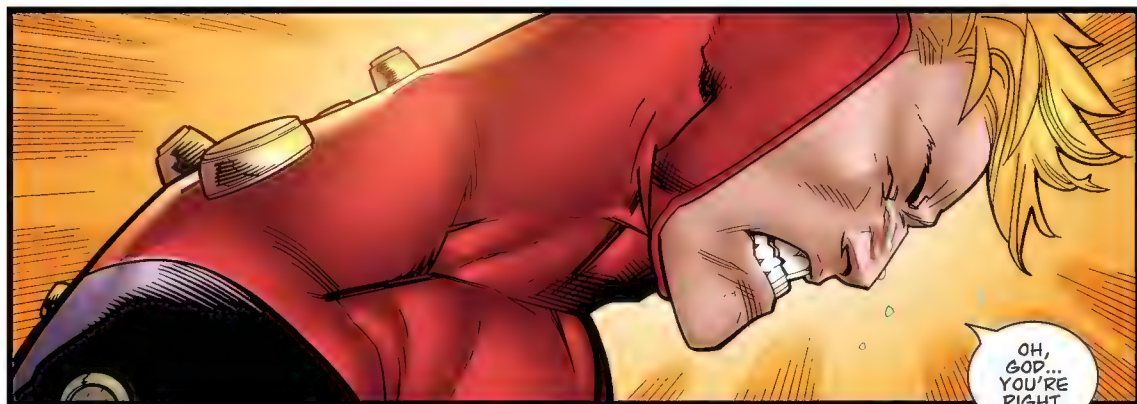
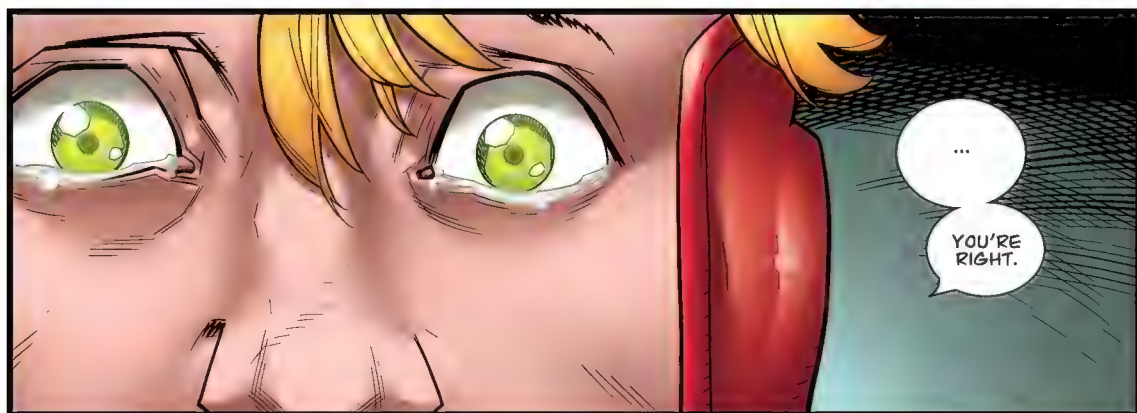
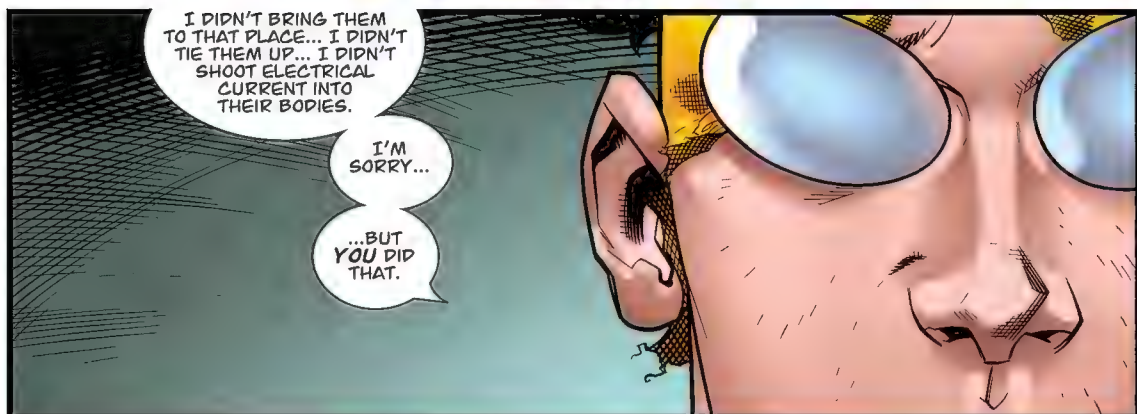
YOU'RE WRONG-- AND YOU'RE ALMOST OUT OF ENERGY, YOUR BLASTS ARE--WEAKER.

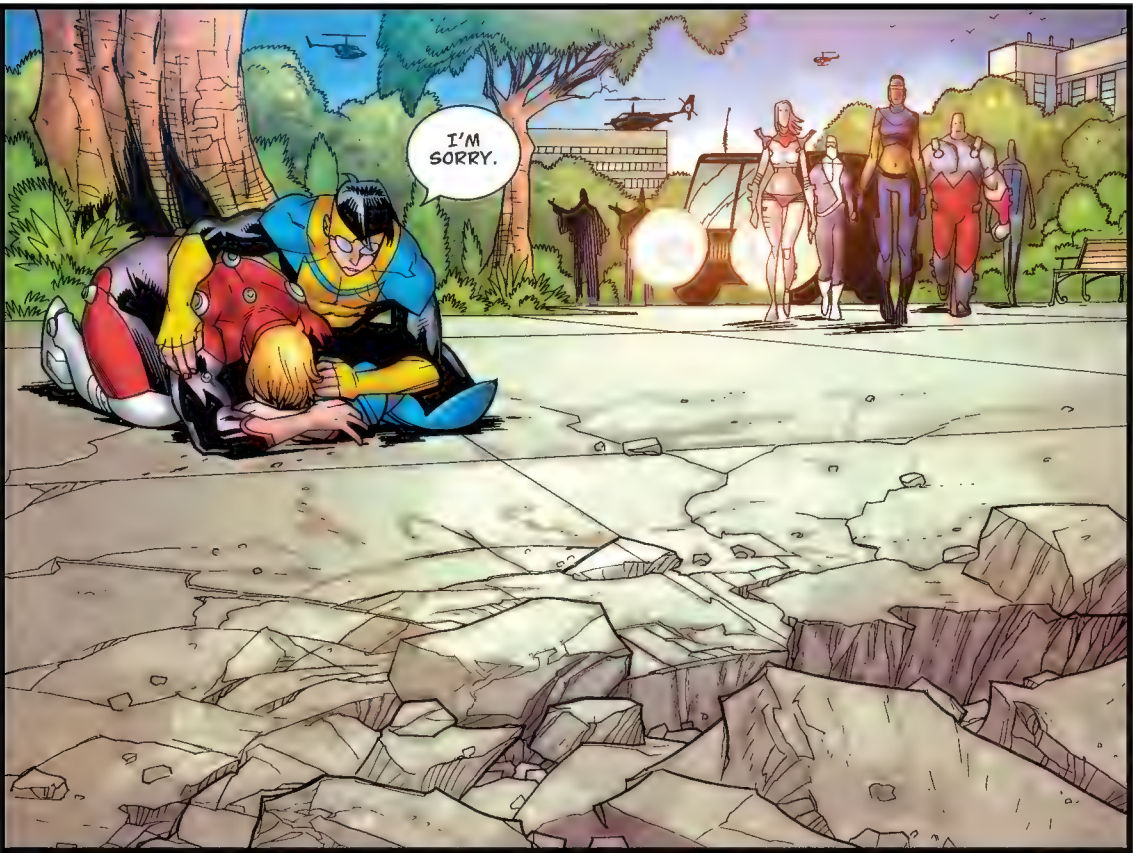
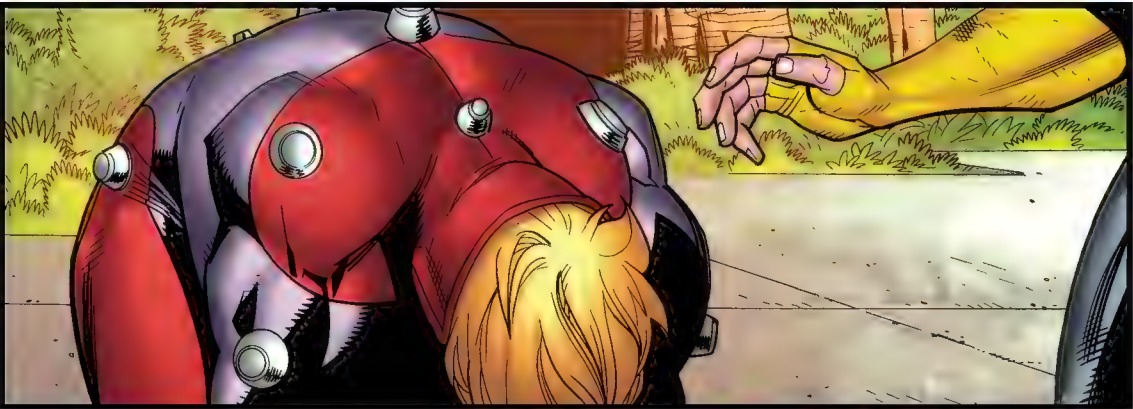
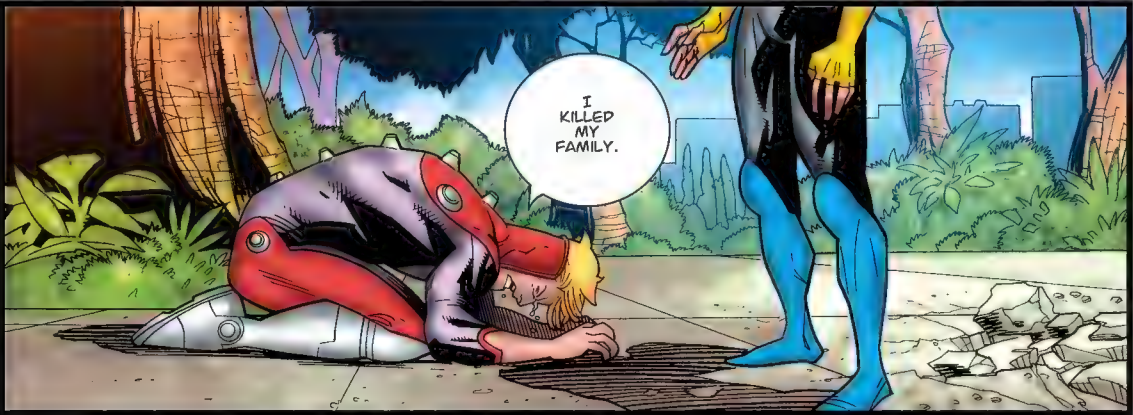


I'VE SAVED THE WORLD, POWERPLEX!

THAT'S WHAT I WAS DOING IN SPACE-- THAT'S WHAT I DO--WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO IN LAS VEGAS.

I DIDN'T PLANT THOSE BOMBS THERE, I DIDN'T TURN THEM ON--ALL I DID WAS FAIL TO STOP THEM.









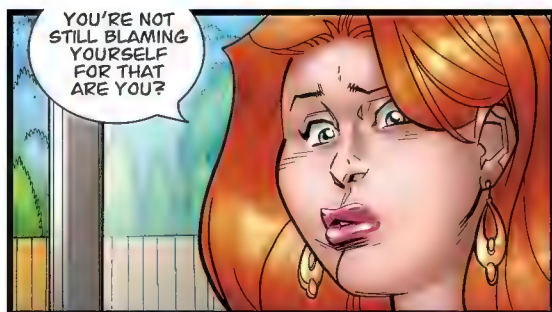


DO I EVEN WANT TO KNOW WHAT KEPT YOU OUT?

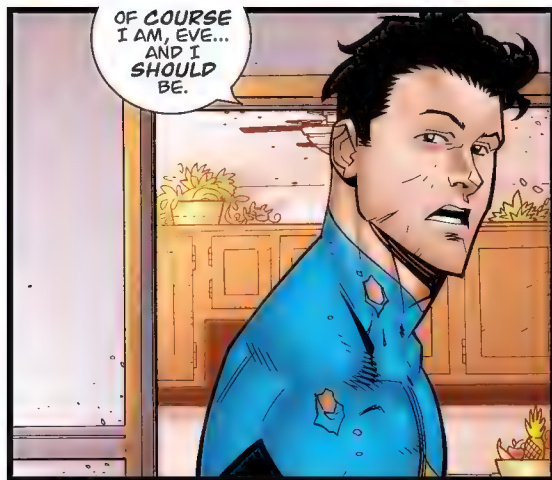
ANOTHER VILLAIN, POWERPLEX-- IT'S TAKEN CARE OF.

NO LEVELED CITIES THIS TIME.

BAD JOKE.



YOU'RE NOT STILL BLAMING YOURSELF FOR THAT ARE YOU?



OF COURSE I AM, EVE... AND I SHOULD BE.

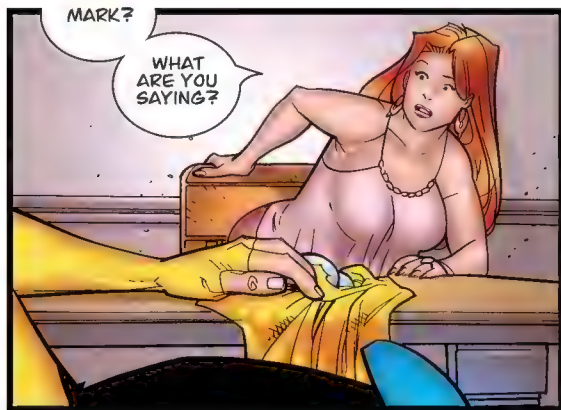


I DIDN'T JUST START DOING THIS BECAUSE OF MY DAD--OR BECAUSE I GOT POWERS. THIS WORLD SUCKS AND I WANT TO HELP PEOPLE.

ALL I WANT TO DO IS HELP PEOPLE.

WHEN I'M TEARING DOWN BUILDINGS, PUNCHING GIANT MONSTERS, BEATING THE SNOT OUT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE JUST CRAZY OR DISTURBED...

THAT'S NOT IT... THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT TO DO.

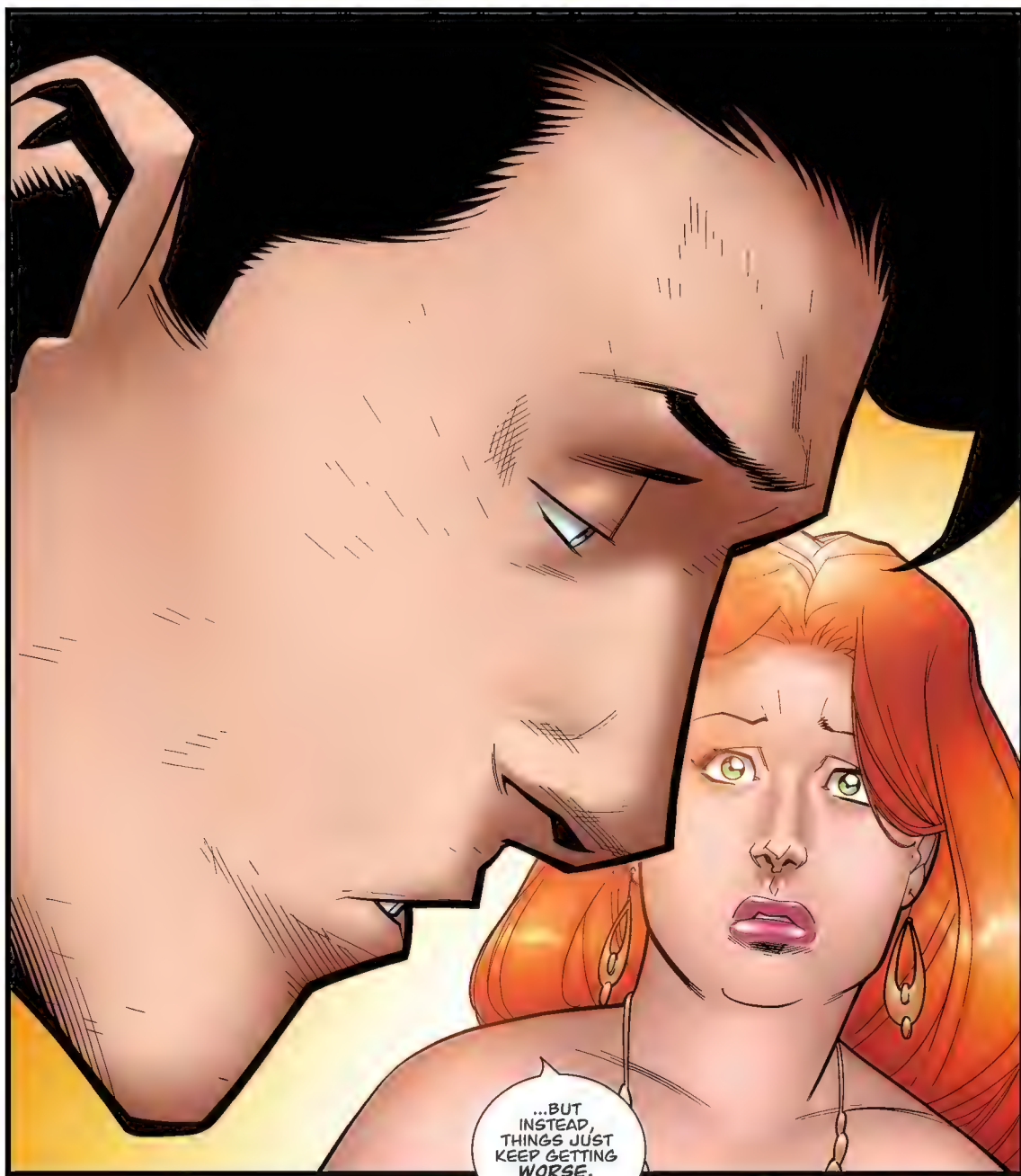
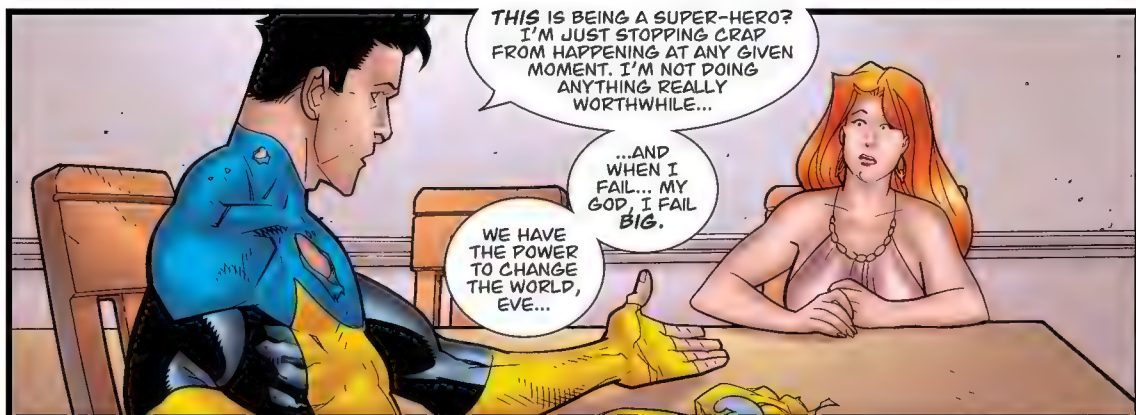


MARK?

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?



I DON'T KNOW...





CHAPTER 82

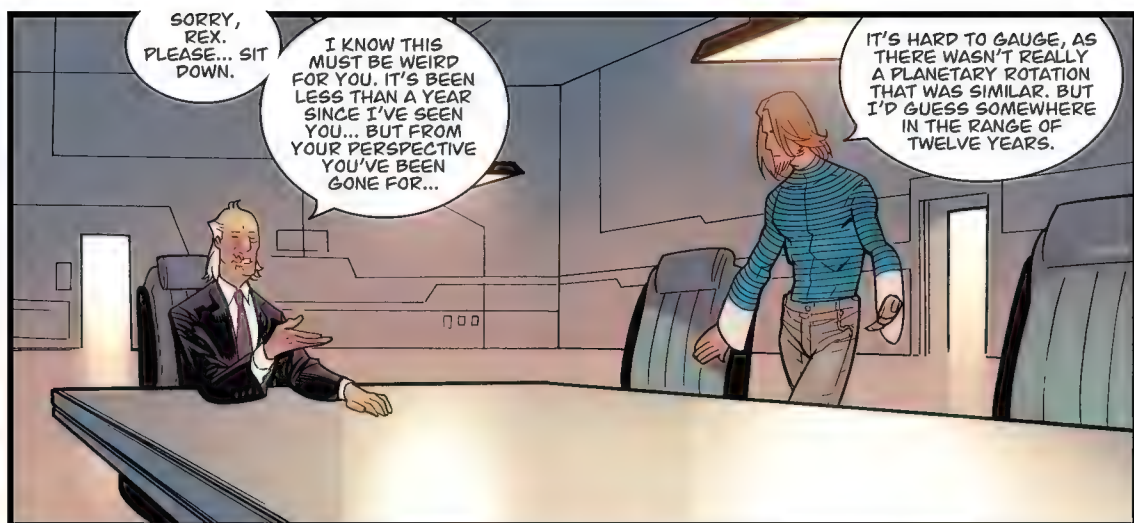




YOU
WANTED
TO SEE ME,
SIR?

ROBOT,
YES... IT'S
GOOD TO
HAVE YOU
BACK.

REX,
ACTUALLY...
IF YOU
WOULD. I
PREFER
THAT,
NOW.



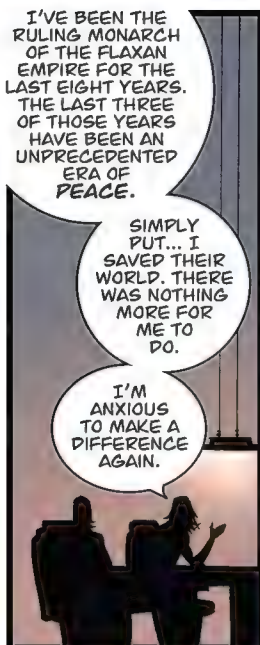
SORRY, REX. PLEASE... SIT DOWN.

I KNOW THIS MUST BE WEIRD FOR YOU. IT'S BEEN LESS THAN A YEAR SINCE I'VE SEEN YOU... BUT FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE YOU'VE BEEN GONE FOR...

IT'S HARD TO GAUGE, AS THERE WASN'T REALLY A PLANETARY ROTATION THAT WAS SIMILAR. BUT I'D GUESS SOMEWHERE IN THE RANGE OF TWELVE YEARS.



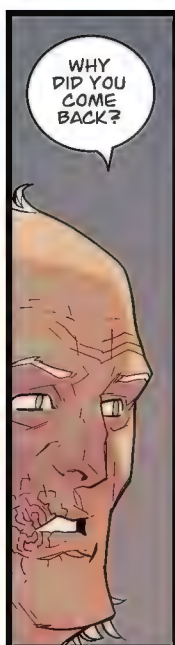
I'M TOLD YOU WANT TO JUST DIVE BACK INTO THINGS. YOU'RE READY TO WORK?



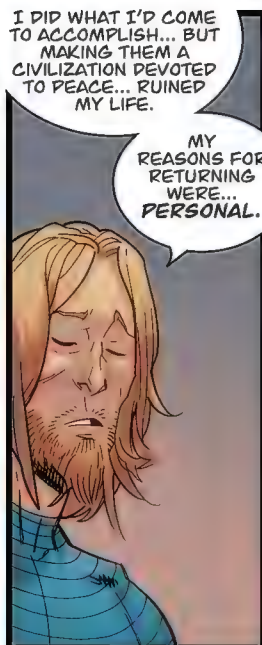
I'VE BEEN THE RULING MONARCH OF THE FLAXAN EMPIRE FOR THE LAST EIGHT YEARS. THE LAST THREE OF THOSE YEARS HAVE BEEN AN UNPRECEDENTED ERA OF PEACE.

SIMPLY PUT... I SAVED THEIR WORLD. THERE WAS NOTHING MORE FOR ME TO DO.

I'M ANXIOUS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE AGAIN.



WHY DID YOU COME BACK?

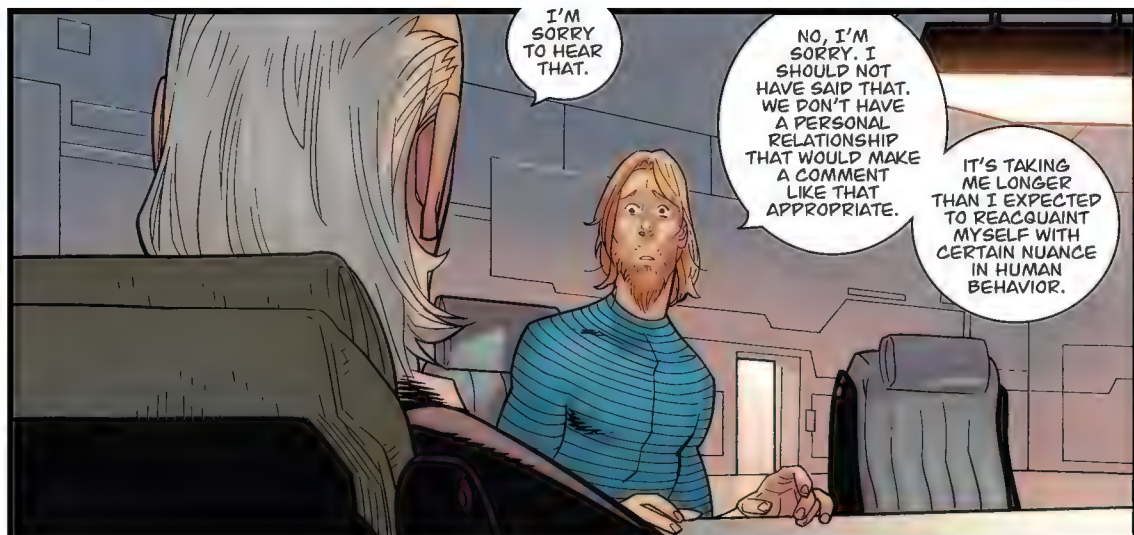


I DID WHAT I'D COME TO ACCOMPLISH... BUT MAKING THEM A CIVILIZATION DEVOTED TO PEACE... RUINED MY LIFE.

MY REASONS FOR RETURNING WERE... PERSONAL.



...



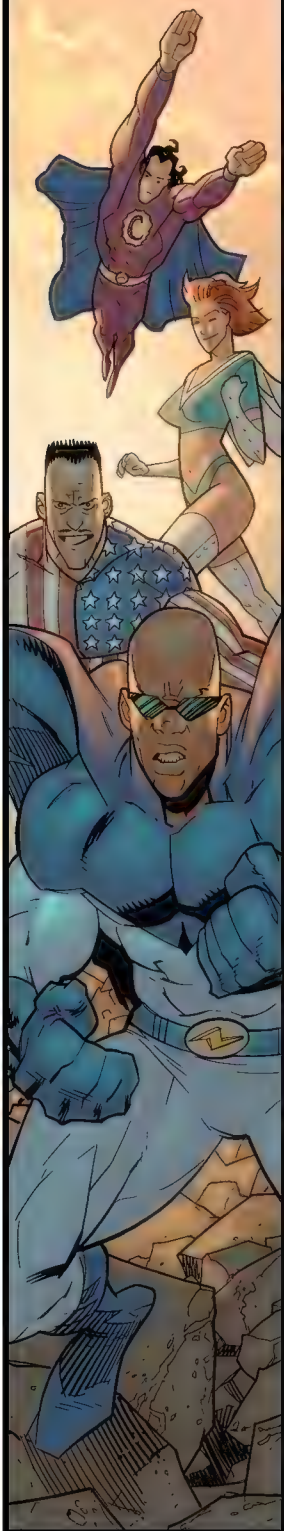
I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT.

NO, I'M SORRY. I SHOULD NOT HAVE SAID THAT. WE DON'T HAVE A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP THAT WOULD MAKE A COMMENT LIKE THAT APPROPRIATE.

IT'S TAKING ME LONGER THAN I EXPECTED TO REACQUAINT MYSELF WITH CERTAIN NUANCE IN HUMAN BEHAVIOR.



I'VE GOT ORGANIZED
TEAMS OF HEROES
BY THE DOZENS.
I'VE GOT CAPES,
INCORPORATED.



THE ACTIONEERS.



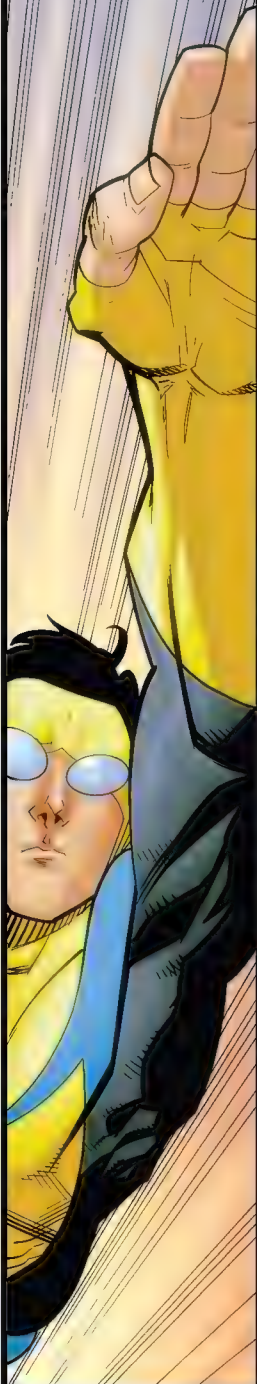
WOLF-MAN
AND THE
WOLF C.O.R.P.S.



TECH JACKET.

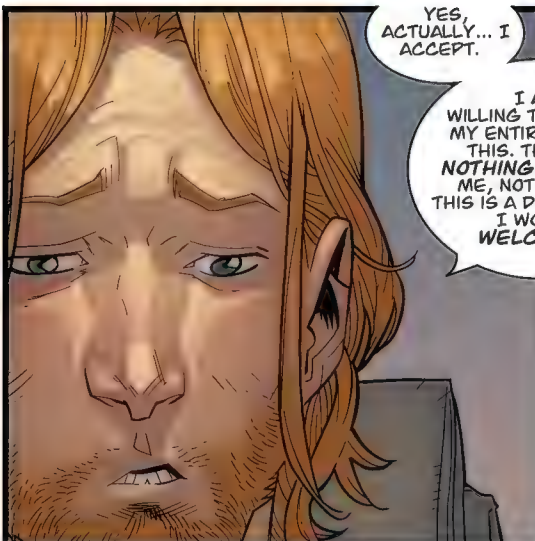
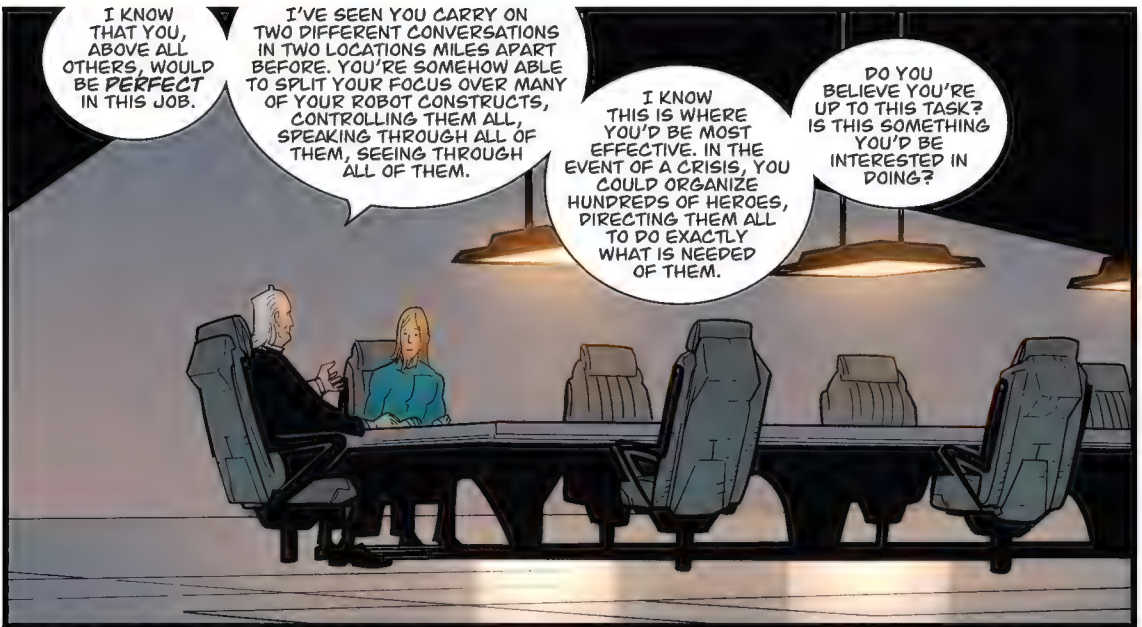
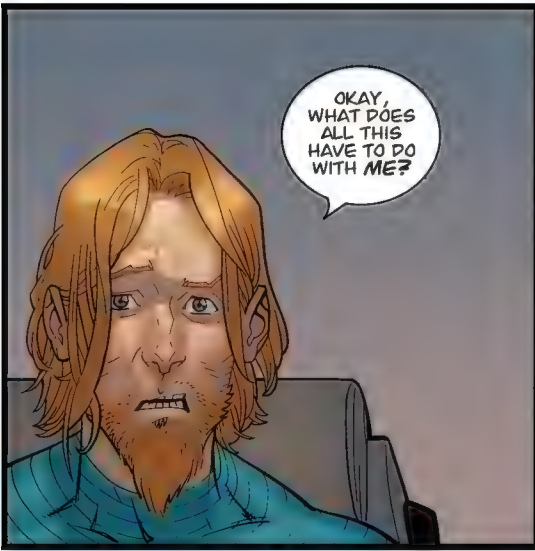


THOUGH HE DOESN'T
DIRECTLY ANSWER
TO ME, THERE'S ALSO
INVINCIBLE.



AND THEN THERE'S THE
NEWLY EXPANDED ROSTER
OF THE GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE.





STRONGHOLD PRISON.



THIS IS VERY UNUSUAL, INVINCIBLE. I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'VE GOT IN MIND, BUT I'M CONCERNED.

I'LL BE HONEST WITH YOU... AFTER WHAT HAPPENED IN LAS VEGAS UNDER YOUR WATCH, I WANTED TO REFUSE YOUR REQUEST.

WHY DIDN'T YOU?



LET'S JUST SAY YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES. FRIENDS THAT TRUST YOU.

MORE THAN I DO.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS OUR CONTRACT WITH INVINCIBLE, INC. I DON'T KNOW THAT--



THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M HERE FOR. IF YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS WITH THE BUSINESS SIDE OF THINGS, YOU KNOW EVE HANDLES THAT.

THIS IS THE CELL, SIR.

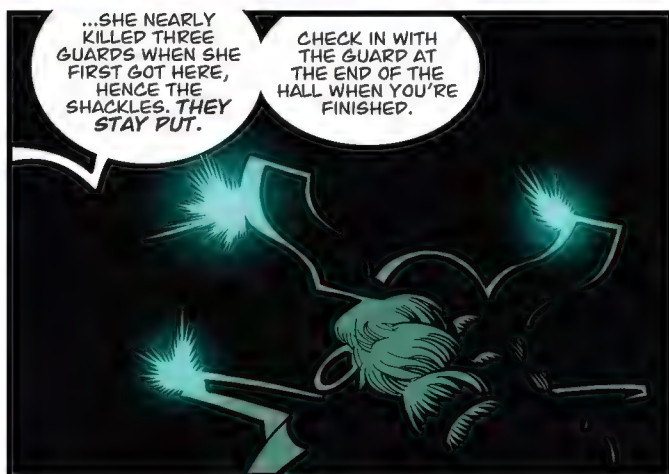
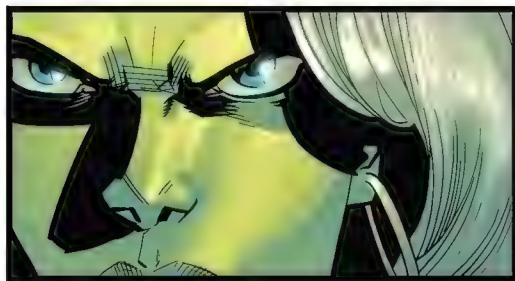
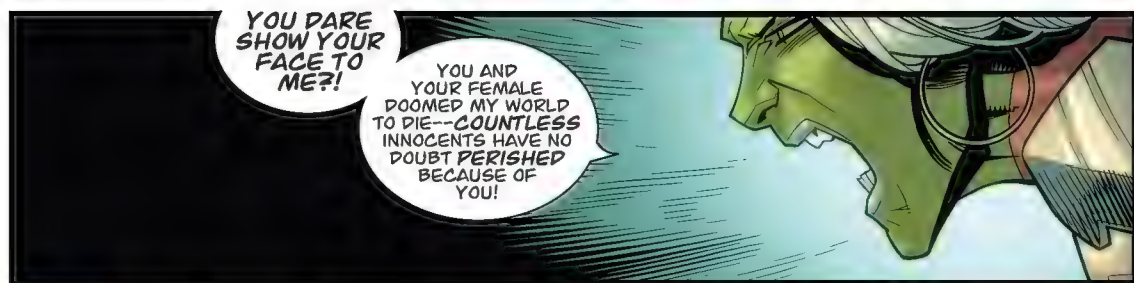


OPEN IT UP.

SHE'S ALL YOURS, KID.









THEIR FATHER IS PROBABLY LETTING THEM WATCH TV THE WHOLE TIME I'M GONE... WHICH THEY'LL LOVE. AND REALLY, THANKS FOR CALLING. ANY EXCUSE FOR ME TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE.

I LOVE MY KIDS, I REALLY DO. BUT I TAKE EVERY LITTLE BREAK I CAN.

I WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN. I'M SORRY HOW LAST TIME--



OH, AND SALAD TIME! I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE UNTIL NOW.

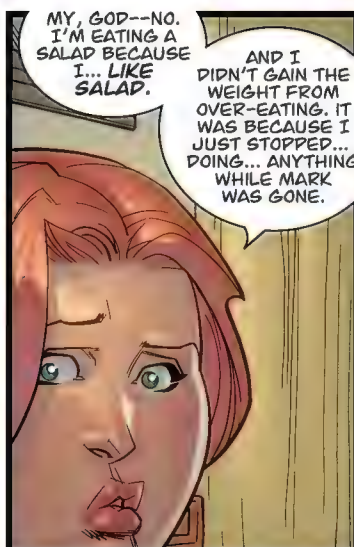
YOU LOSING THE WEIGHT FOR MARK NOW THAT HE'S BACK?

BRAVO, GIRL.



MY, GOD--NO. I'M EATING A SALAD BECAUSE I... LIKE SALAD.

AND I DIDN'T GAIN THE WEIGHT FROM OVER-EATING. IT WAS BECAUSE I JUST STOPPED... DOING... ANYTHING WHILE MARK WAS GONE.

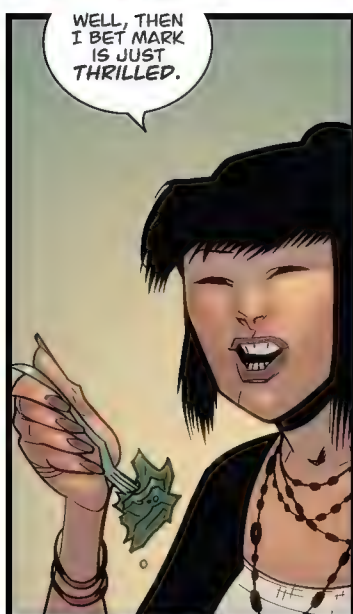


I NEVER REALIZED HOW MANY CALORIES USING MY POWERS BURNED. I DIDN'T REALLY DO MUCH OF ANYTHING SUPER-HERO-WISE WHILE MARK WAS GONE.

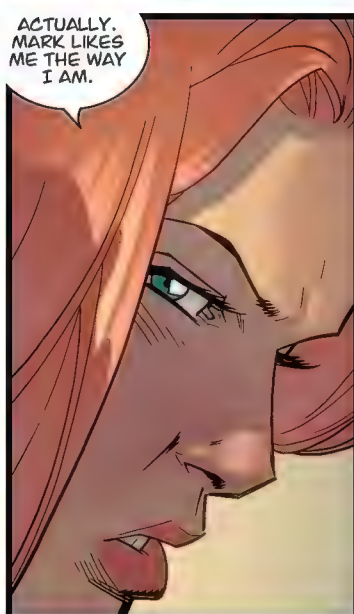
I'M ACTUALLY SLOWLY LOSING WEIGHT NOW THAT I'M BACK IN ACTION FROM TIME TO TIME.



WELL, THEN I BET MARK IS JUST THRILLED.



ACTUALLY. MARK LIKES ME THE WAY I AM.



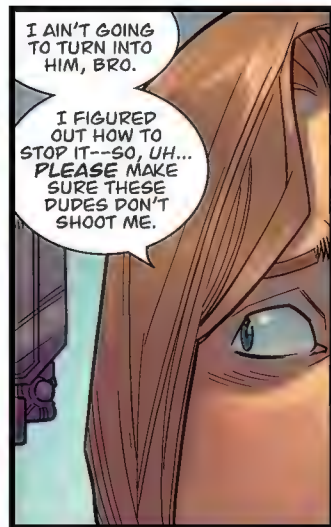
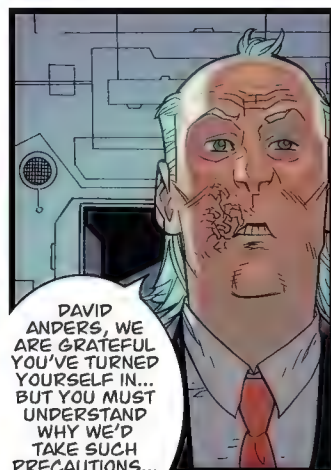
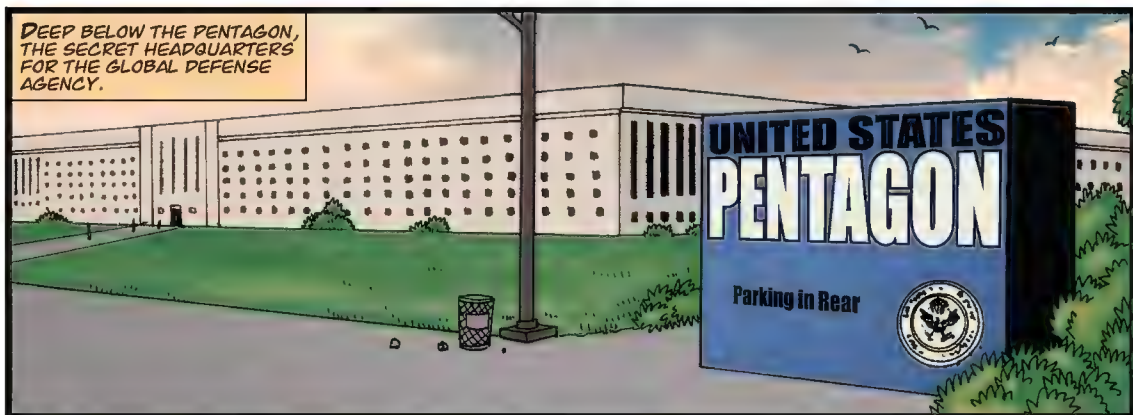
HE DOES?

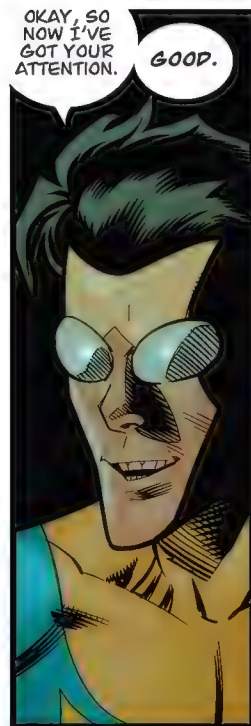
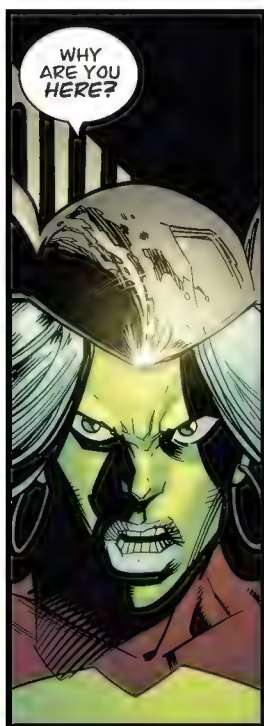
REALLY?

WEIRD.



DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON,
THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS
FOR THE GLOBAL DEFENSE
AGENCY.







OKAY, THE BOTTOM LINE IS THIS, I GET IT--YOUR WORLD IS IN DANGER, IT NEEDS POWER--YOU'VE GOT PEOPLE DYING. YOU'RE DESPERATE.

BUT YOU'RE HERE TO HELP PEOPLE, **YOUR** PEOPLE, BUT STILL-- IT COUNTS. WHAT I'M SAYING IS, YOU'RE NOT EVIL.

YOU'RE DESPERATE.



YOU JUST WANT TO SAVE YOUR PLANET... IF YOU COULD DO THAT WITHOUT HURTING ANYONE... YOU'D DO IT, RIGHT?



...

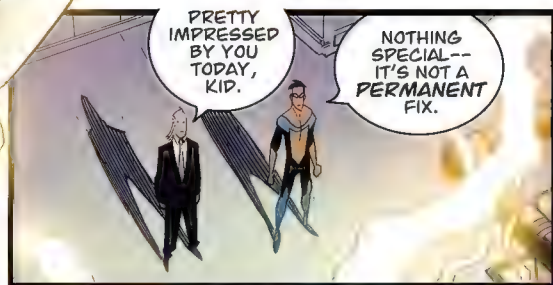


LET ME BE CLEAR. IF I COULD GET YOU SET FREE, AND ALSO SOMEHOW HELP YOU-- SO THAT YOU COULD GO BACK TO YOUR HOME WORLD...

WOULD YOU COOPERATE WITH ME, WITHOUT FIGHTING ME OR TRYING TO KILL ME... OR ANYONE ON THIS PLANET?

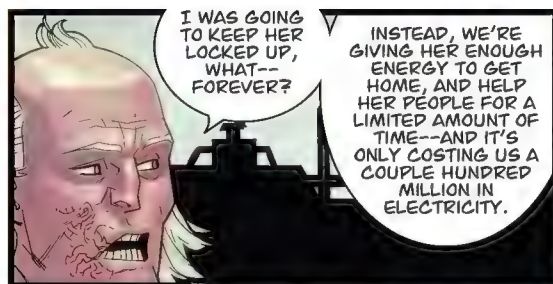


YES.



PRETTY
IMPRESSED
BY YOU
TODAY,
KID.

NOTHING
SPECIAL--
IT'S NOT A
PERMANENT
FIX.



I WAS GOING
TO KEEP HER
LOCKED UP,
WHAT--
FOREVER?

INSTEAD, WE'RE
GIVING HER ENOUGH
ENERGY TO GET
HOME, AND HELP
HER PEOPLE FOR A
LIMITED AMOUNT OF
TIME--AND IT'S
ONLY COSTING US A
COUPLE HUNDRED
MILLION IN
ELECTRICITY.



IT'S A SIMPLE PLAN. ROLLING
BLACKOUTS ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY
IN TEN MINUTE INTERVALS,
FEED HER THE JUICE
INSTEAD.

DOESN'T
HURT
ANYONE--
JUST
HELPS.

WELL,
WE DIDN'T
THINK OF IT.
YOU DID.



YOUR PEOPLE
WERE SCARED
OF HER. THAT'S A
PROBLEM.

ANYWAY,
LOOKS LIKE
SHE'S ALMOST
DONE, I'LL NEED
TO ESCORT
HER TO THE
NEXT POWER
STATION.



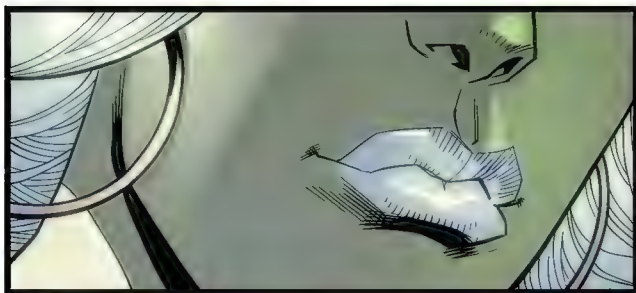
SURE, LISTEN. COME
BY THE PENTAGON
AFTER YOU'RE DONE
WITH HER... I'D
LIKE TO TALK
TO YOU.

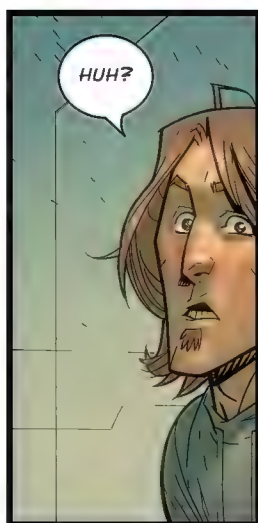
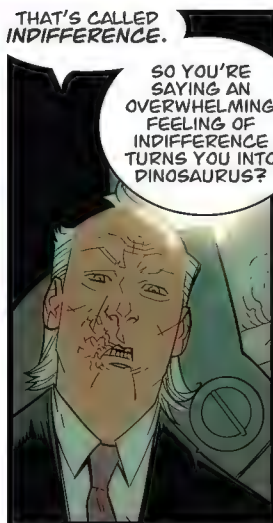
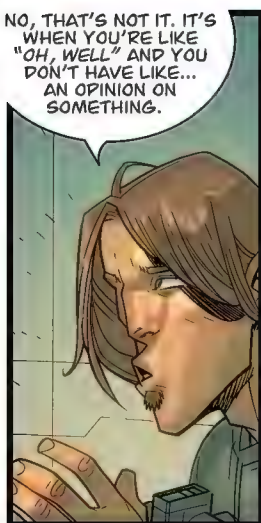
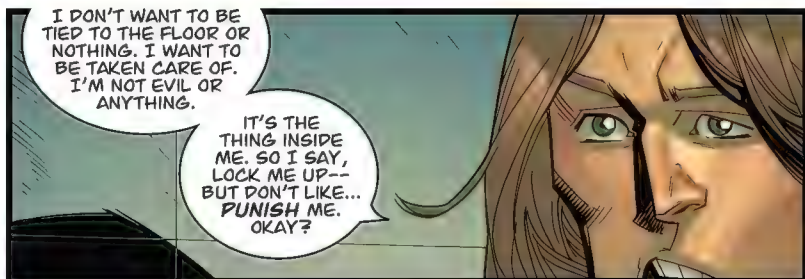
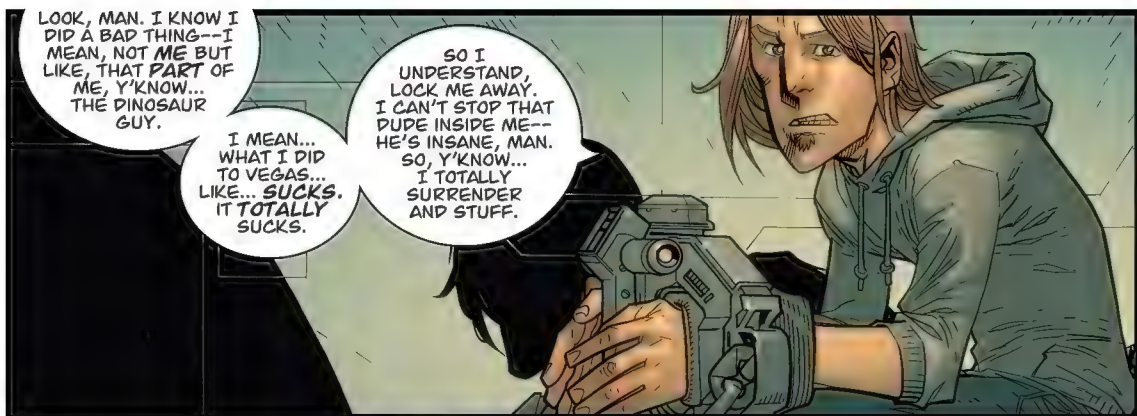
...

NOTHING
SERIOUS.



OH,
UH...
SURE.
WILL
DO.





THE GUARDIANS OF THE
GLOBE CENTRAL BASE, UTAH.

I ACCEPTED, OF COURSE.
IT REALLY IS A GOOD IDEA.
IT'S DEFINITELY HOW I'D
BE MOST USEFUL. IT'S
REALLY A GLORIFIED
DISPATCHER, BUT MY
PRONES COULD BE
ASSISTING IN
BATTLE AS
WELL.

I THINK IT
WILL GIVE ME
PURPOSE.

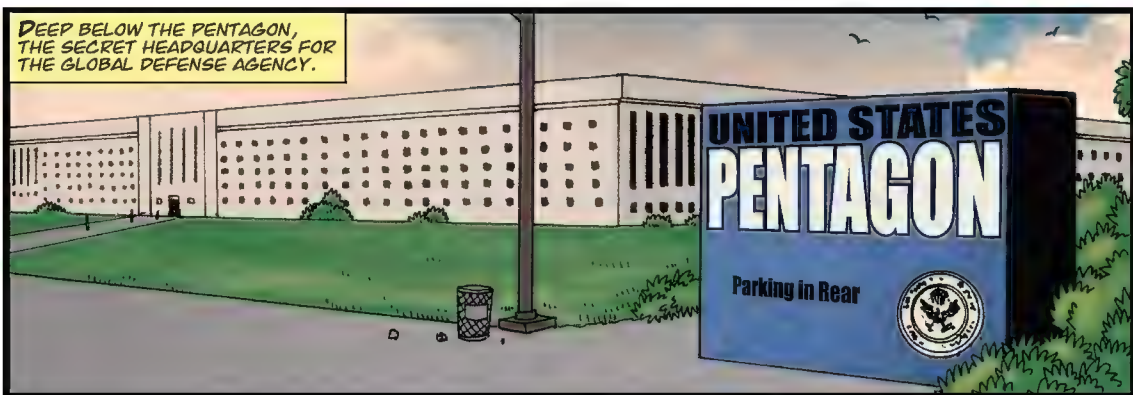
SOMETHING
I REALLY MISSED
WHEN WE WERE
RULING
THE FLAXAN
EMPIRE.

ARE YOU...
ADJUSTING
WELL?

EVERYTHING
IS SO...
DIFFERENT
NOW...

YEAH.

DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON,
THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS FOR
THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY.



MEETING IN
THE WHITE
ROOM? THIS
IS NEVER
A GOOD
SIGN.



I THINK
WE'RE PAST
ALL THAT.
RELAX, I
JUST WANT
TO TALK.

I BELIEVE
YOU'VE BEEN
BROUGHT UP TO
SPEED ON THE
VARIOUS THINGS THAT
HAPPENED WHILE
YOU WERE GONE... AND
YOU'VE WITNESSED
FIRST HAND JUST HOW
BAD THINGS ARE
OUT THERE.

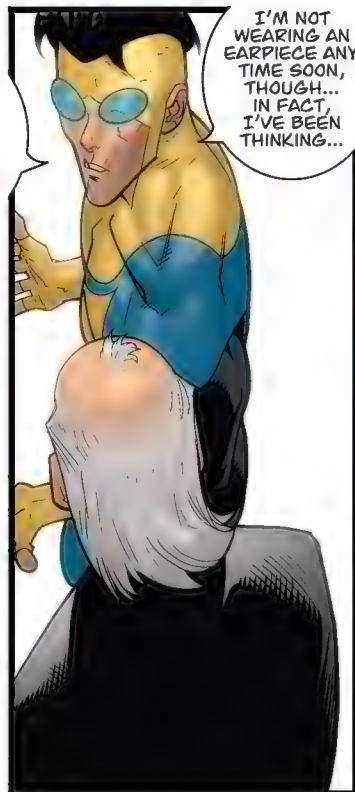
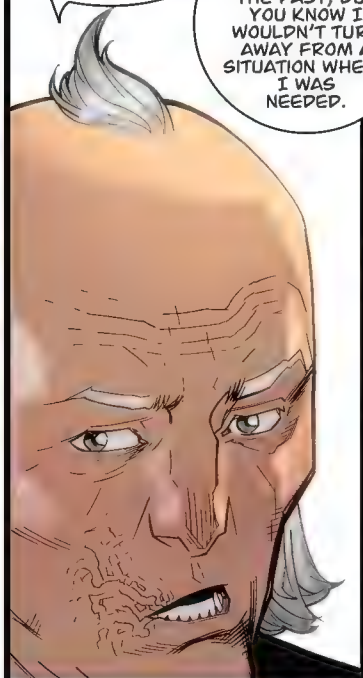
YEAH. IT WAS ALWAYS
DANGEROUS... BUT... I
COULD STAND TO HAVE
A FEW MORE BANK
ROBBERS AND A LOT
LESS DESTROYED
CITIES...

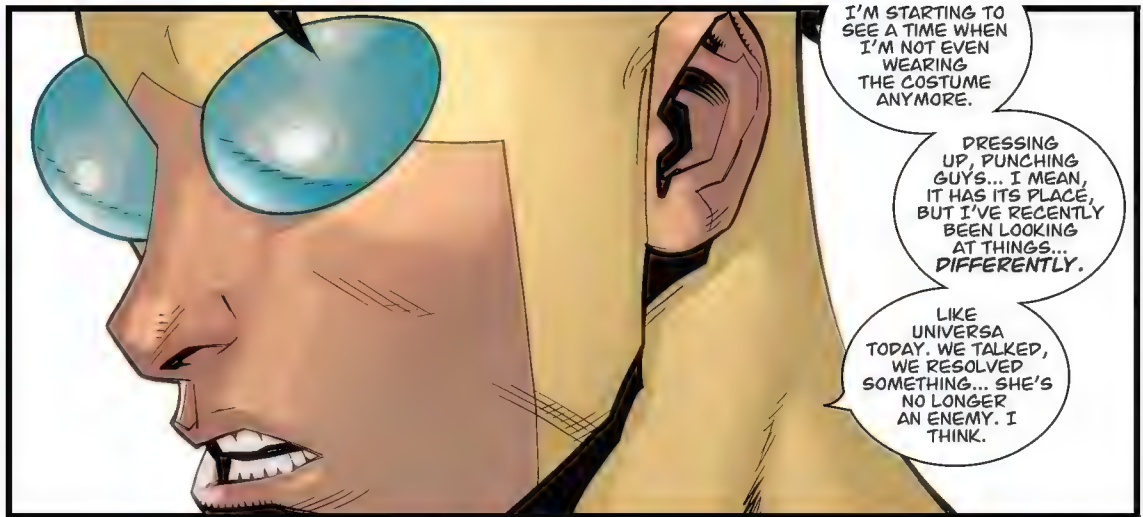
NOT TO
MAKE
LIGHT OF
THINGS...

WHAT I'M GETTING AT,
IS... I'D JUST LIKE TO
KNOW IF I CAN COUNT
ON YOU... IF I
NEED YOU.

WE'VE
HAD OUR
DIFFERENCES IN
THE PAST, BUT
YOU KNOW I
WOULDN'T TURN
AWAY FROM A
SITUATION WHERE
I WAS
NEEDED.

I'M NOT
WEARING AN
EARPIECE ANY
TIME SOON,
THOUGH...
IN FACT,
I'VE BEEN
THINKING...





I'M STARTING TO SEE A TIME WHEN I'M NOT EVEN WEARING THE COSTUME ANYMORE.

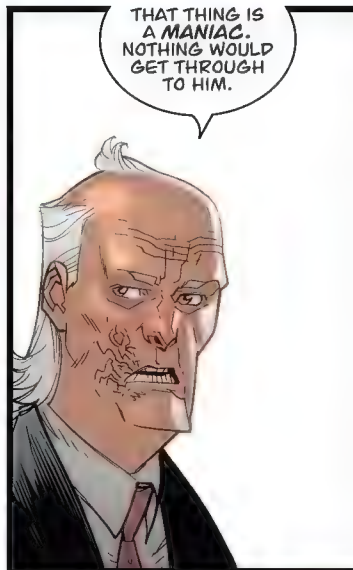
DRESSING UP, PUNCHING GUYS... I MEAN, IT HAS ITS PLACE, BUT I'VE RECENTLY BEEN LOOKING AT THINGS... DIFFERENTLY.

LIKE UNIVERSA TODAY. WE TALKED, WE RESOLVED SOMETHING... SHE'S NO LONGER AN ENEMY. I THINK.



THAT SEEMS SO MUCH **SMARTER** THAN... FIGHTING.

MAYBE IF I'D TRIED A DIFFERENT APPROACH WITH DINOSAURUS...



THAT THING IS A **MANIAC**. NOTHING WOULD GET THROUGH TO HIM.

HOW CAN YOU BE SO CERTAIN? EVERYONE **WANTS** SOMETHING... AND THESE GUYS ARE JUST TRYING TO GET IT.

I DON'T AGREE WITH HIS METHODS, BUT FROM WHAT HE SAYS, DINOSAURUS THINKS HE'S ACTUALLY **HELPING** HUMANITY.

I THINK THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHING TO THAT...



THAT'S AN ARGUMENT FOR ANOTHER TIME, THEN.

SO, TO WRAP UP... I CAN COUNT ON YOU IF I NEED YOU?



OF COURSE... YES.



GOOD. NOW THAT WE'RE ON SPEAKING TERMS AGAIN, I FIGURE IT'S BEST TO JUST TELL YOU THINGS UP FRONT THAT I FEEL MIGHT UPSET YOU.

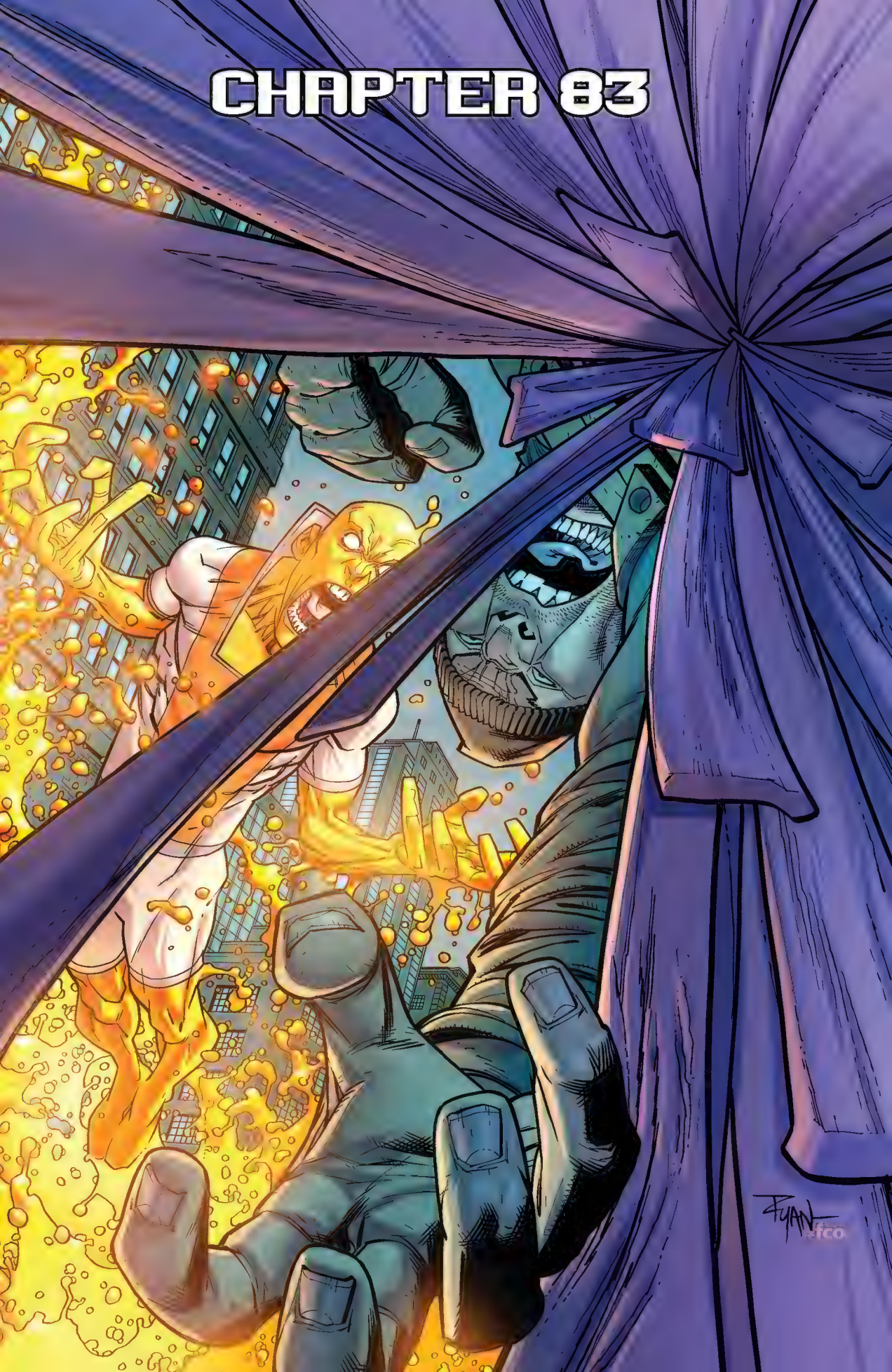
DON'T BE ALARMED, BUT...



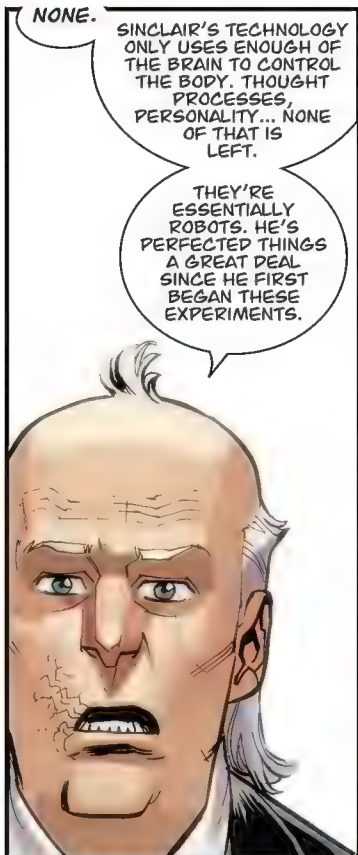
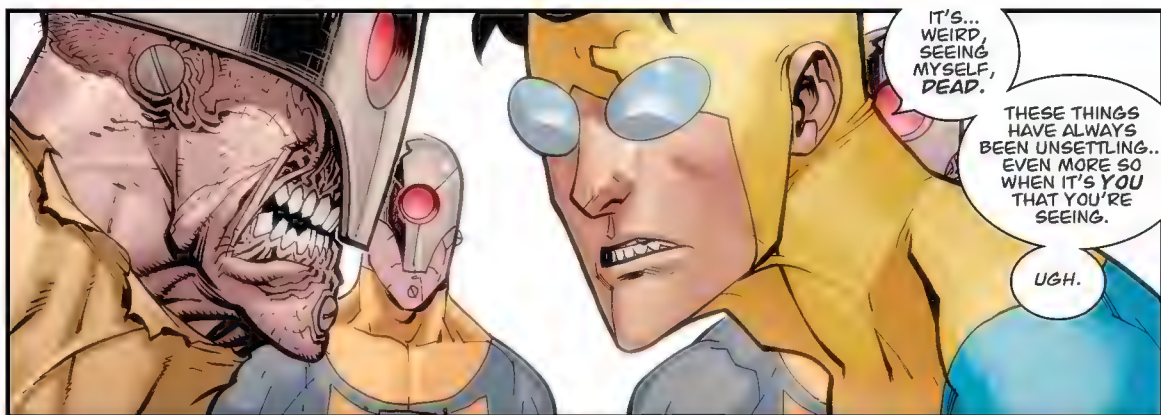
THERE
ARE THINGS
I'VE BEEN
KEEPING
FROM
YOU...

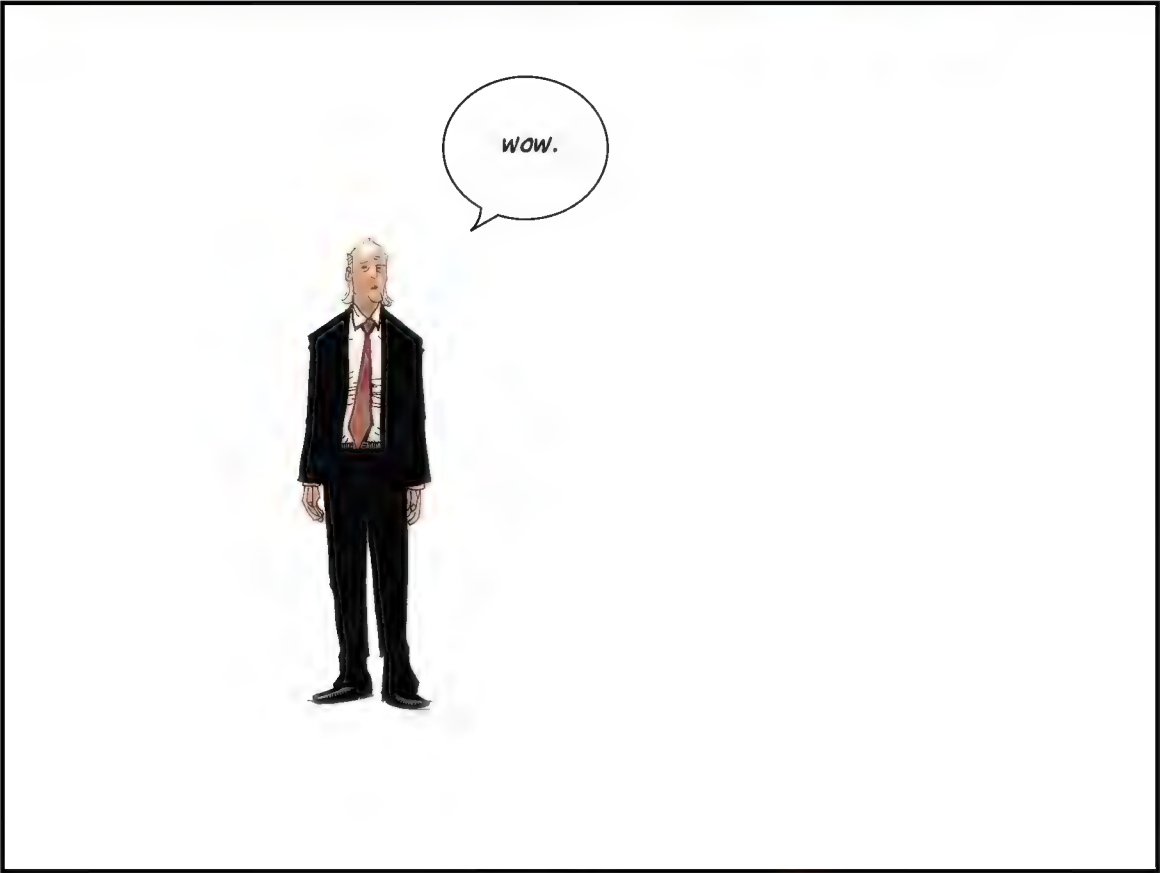
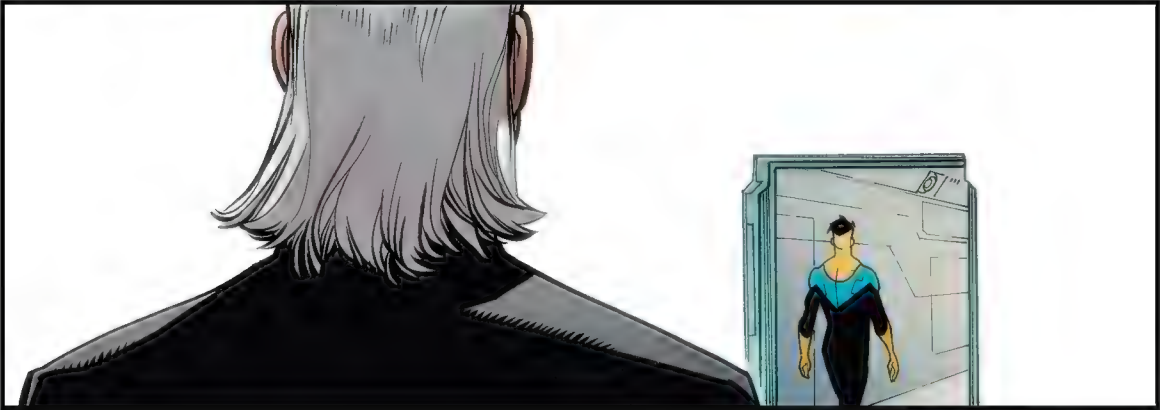


CHAPTER 83









THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF CRIMINAL MASTERMIND, TITAN.

WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING, BOSS.

WE'VE TRIED TO GO LEGIT... THAT DIDN'T WORK, WE JUST COULDN'T MAKE ENDS MEET.

WE TRIED TO GO BACK TO CRIME ON OUR OWN--WE COULDN'T HACK IT.

WORKING FOR MACHINE HEAD WAS NO GREAT SHAKES... BUT YOU WERE ONE OF US--A THUG, YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE...

WORKING FOR YOU, IT'S BEEN EASIER. AND WE KNOW WE HAVEN'T BEEN THE MOST USEFUL PARTS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION...

IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME TO INTERRUPT YOUR RAMBLE...

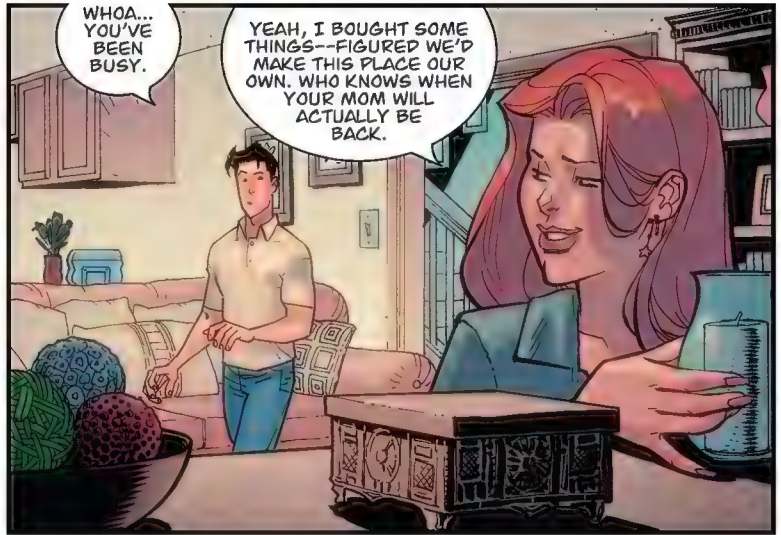
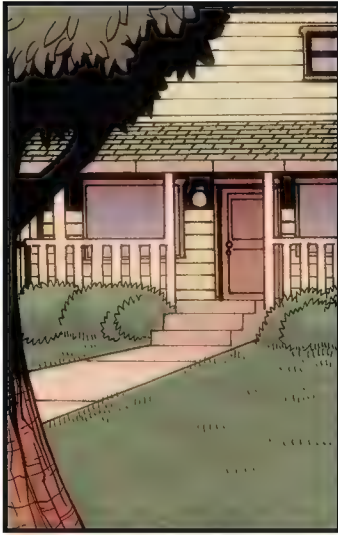
YOU WISH TO PROVE YOUR WORTH. UNDERSTANDABLE. ADMIRABLE. THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT I'M STILL TRYING TO REBUILD MY ORGANIZATION IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT DEBACLE WITH THE ORDER.*

IT'S BROUGHT DOWN A LOT OF HEAT ON ME AND THIS ORGANIZATION.

*SEE GUARDING THE GLOBE, VOLUME I.

SO WHAT I'M SAYING IS, THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU COULD PROVE VERY VALUABLE TO ME.

WERE YOU WILLING TO TAKE THINGS TO THE NEXT LEVEL... IN FACT, I THINK I KNOW JUST THE TASK WITH WHICH TO PROVE YOURSELVES.





AND YOU'VE BEEN GONE FOR TWELVE YEARS FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

YOU RULED THE FLAXAN EMPIRE FOR A TIME--THAT'S IMPRESSIVE.

YOUR TIME AWAY HAS CERTAINLY, UM... BENEFITED YOU...

THAT'S RIGHT, BOYS. TWELVE YEARS AWAY... SOME OF YOU I BARELY REMEMBER, SOME OF YOU I DON'T REMEMBER...

...AND TAKE NOTE--THE WOMAN YOU SEE BEFORE YOU HAS A BRAIN THAT'S OVER FORTY YEARS OLD.

THERE ARE PARTS OF YOUR CLOTHES WHERE THERE ARE NO CLOTHES AND WE CAN SEE YOUR SKIN INSTEAD.

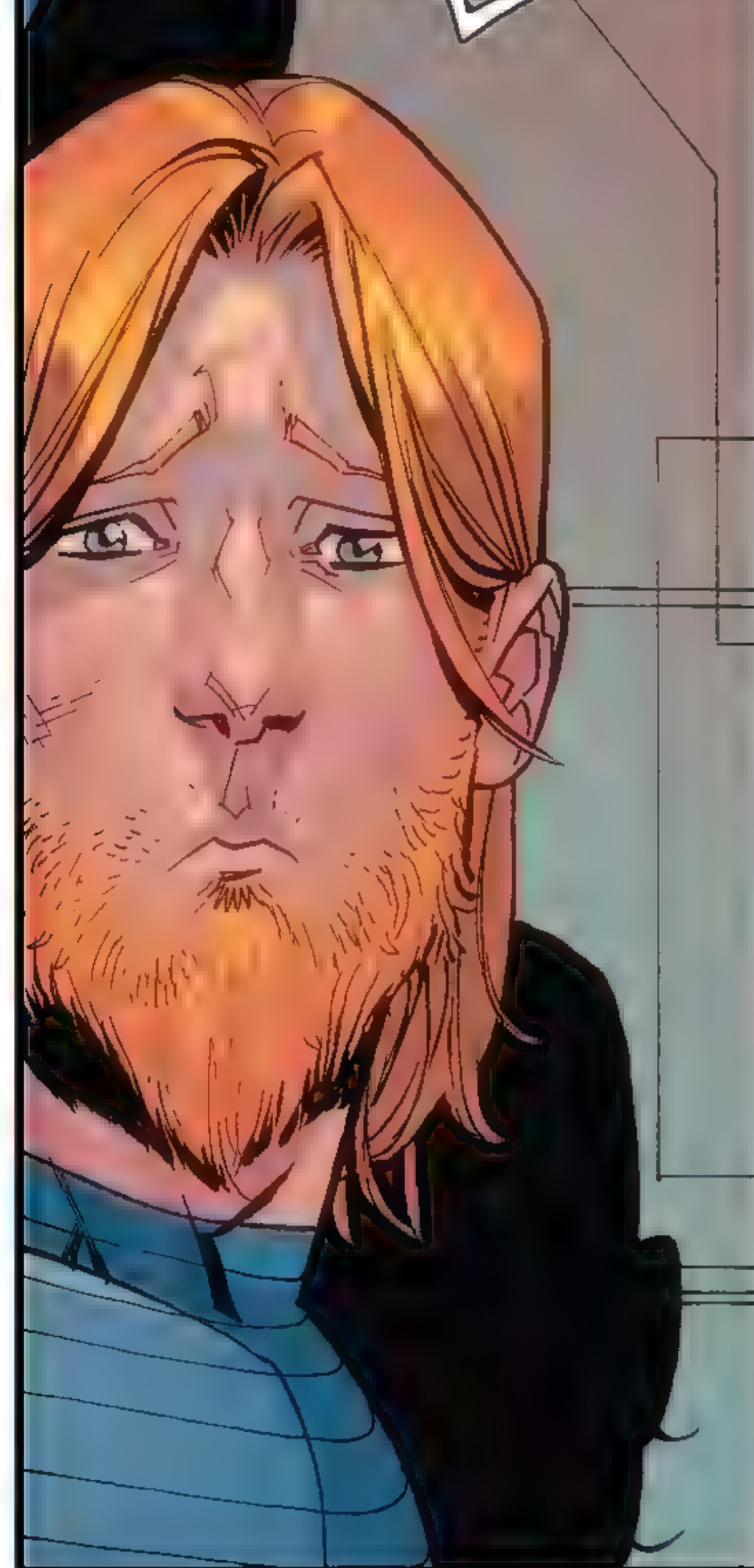
UGH. DO THEY STILL MAKE CIGARETTES?

SORRY, REX. I'M GOING AFTER MY FIANCE BEFORE HE TACKLES HER.

THAT'LL GET AT LEAST ONE GUY TO GIVE HER SOME SPACE...



HEY, MAN!



BYE!



IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU BACK.

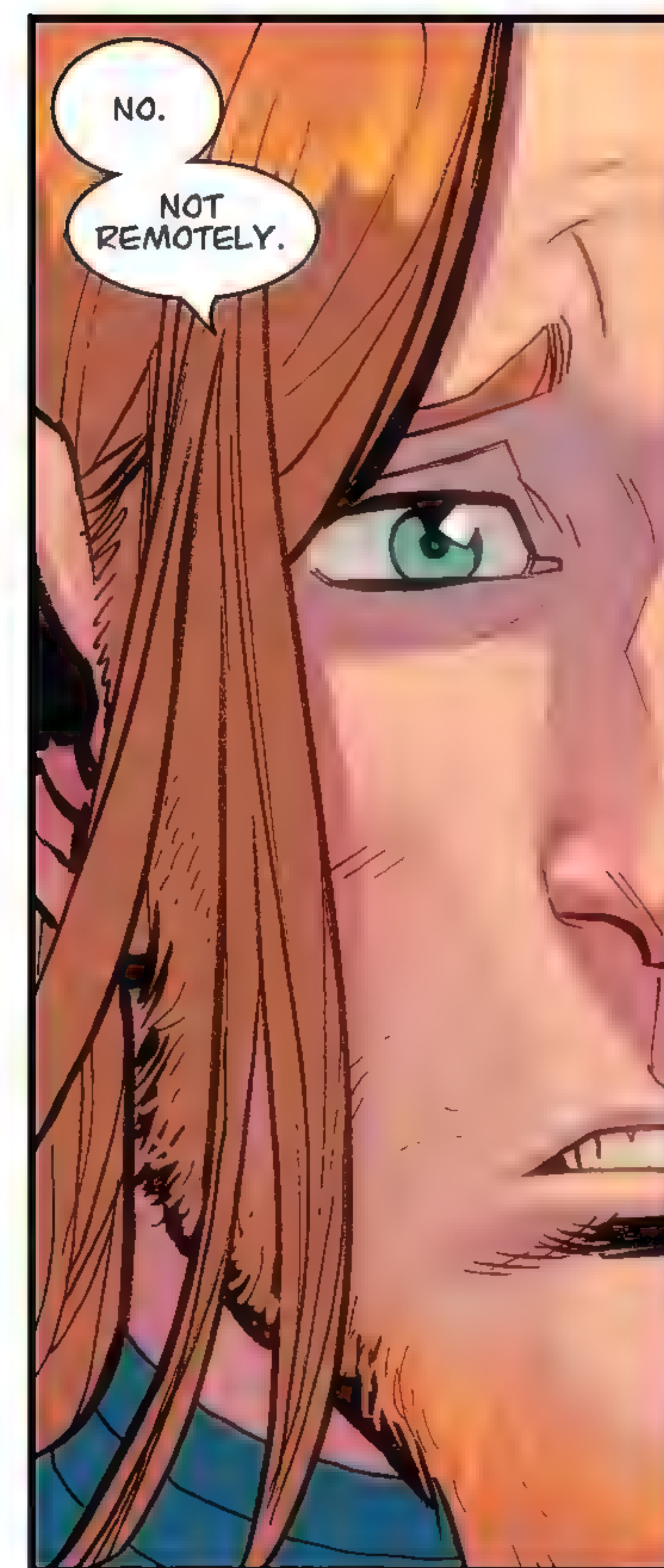
I GOTTA ADMIT, I REALLY MISSED HAVING YOU AROUND. I KNOW WE WERE NEVER THAT CLOSE, BUT--



HEY.



EVERYTHING OKAY BETWEEN YOU AND MONSTER GIRL?



NO. NOT REMOTELY.



I'M GOING TO GO STAKE OUT THEIR PLACE--IT'S LIKE A FORTRESS. FOR THE RECORD, I'M NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THIS, TITAN REALLY IS ASKING FOR THE MOON... WHY WOULD HE SEND JUST US?

TO AVOID RETALIATION. HE WANTS US TO LOOK LIKE ROGUE AGENTS-- LIKE HE'S NOT BEHIND IT. HE DOESN'T THINK WE'LL PULL IT OFF.

BUT WE WILL... I'D COME WITH YOU, BUT I REALLY NEED TO SEPARATE-- I'VE BEEN BONDED TOO LONG.

I GET IT, MAN. AT LEAST... CLEAN UP A LITTLE OR SOMETHING WHILE I'M OUT.



HE'S GONE. YEAH. HE KNOWS YOU'RE ALIVE, THOUGH. WE DON'T KEEP SECRETS FROM EACH OTHER.

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU WON'T TALK TO ME IN FRONT OF HIM--I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE HIM, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE HE'S GOING TO HEAR YOU.

I KNOW... BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT. I KNOW A PERMANENT BOND WOULD MAKE ME STRONGER-- MAYBE EVEN HELP US PULL THIS OFF, BUT YOU'VE SAID IT WOULD... **TRANSFORM ME.**

I TRUST YOU... WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR YEARS... BUT I JUST DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT.



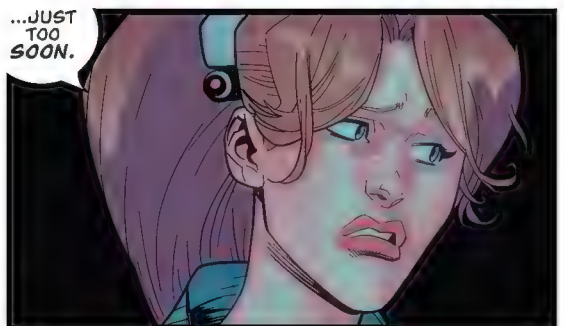
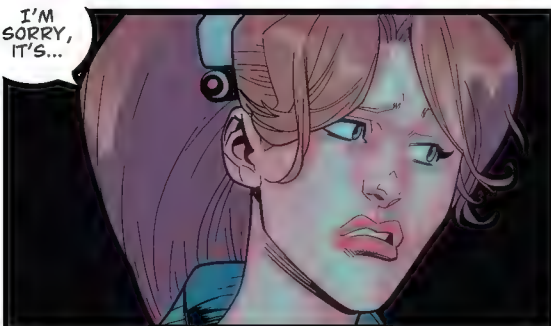
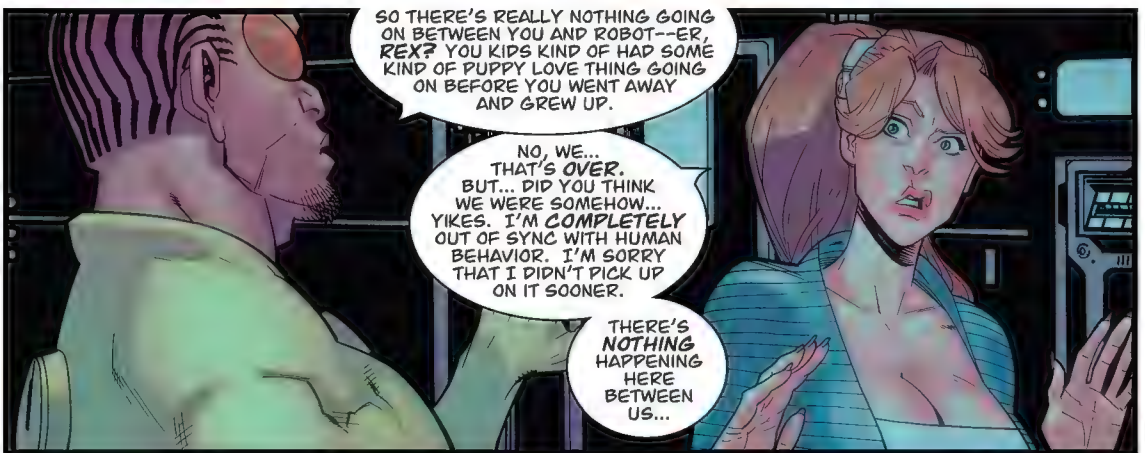
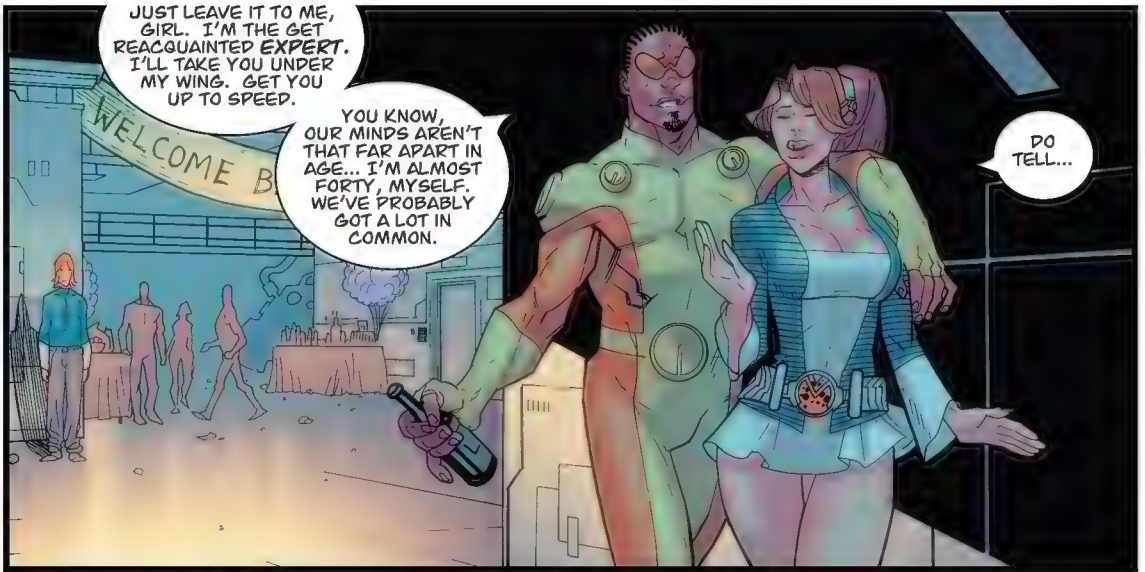
NO, OKAY? I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.

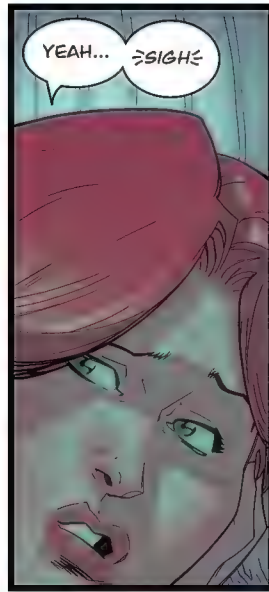
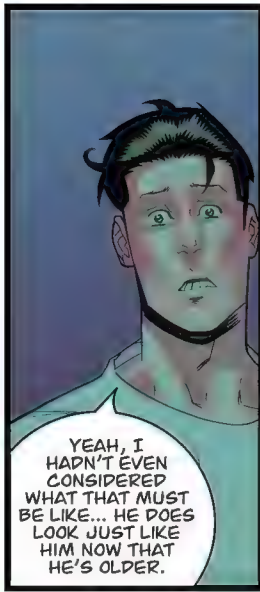
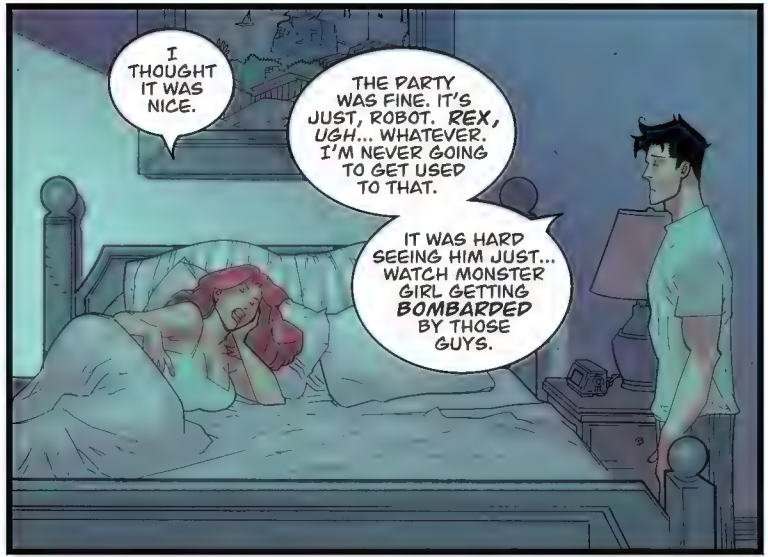
PLEASE... DON'T BRING IT UP AGAIN.



OH, CALM DOWN.

IT'S OKAY-- IT'LL JUST BE FOR A LITTLE WHILE.





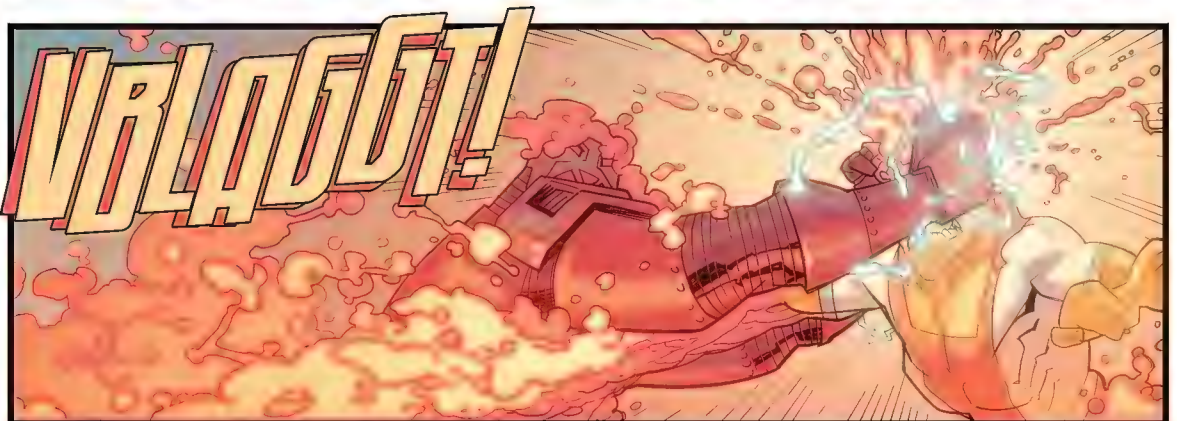
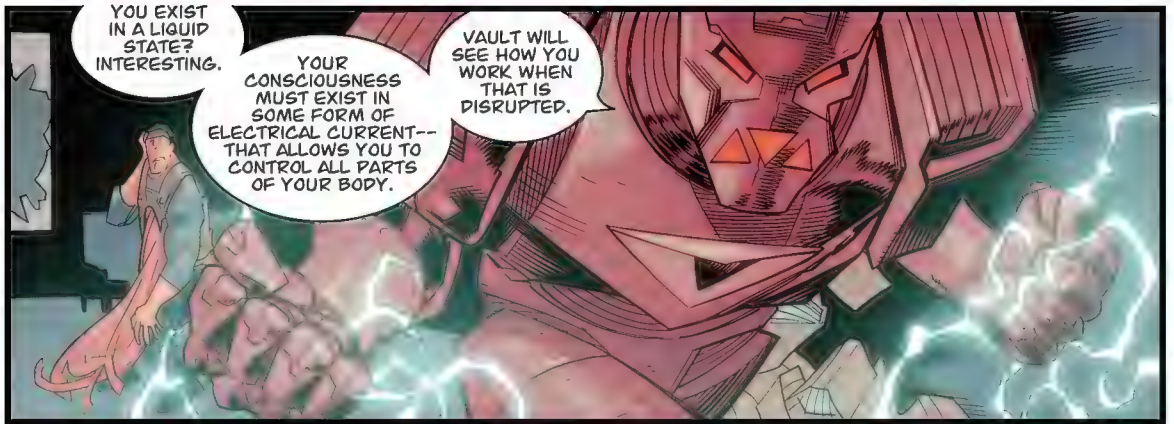
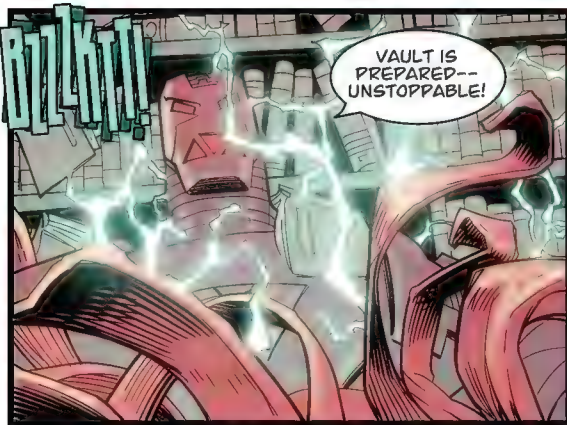


WHAT?!

MAGMANIAC?!
TETHER
TYRANT?!

ARE YOU
BZZTZ
IDIOTS?!

VAULT.
KILL
THEM!





WAIT--
WHAT IS
THIS?!

WHERE
AM I?
ARE YOU
HERE?

DID WE
BOND? DID
YOU TAKE
OVER?
DID...

DID
I DIE,
TOO?



JAMES...
HOW COULD
I LET--

...



IF YOU
CAN HEAR
ME--I DON'T
WANT THIS! I
TAKE IT BACK! I
DON'T WANT
YOU TO TAKE
OVER.



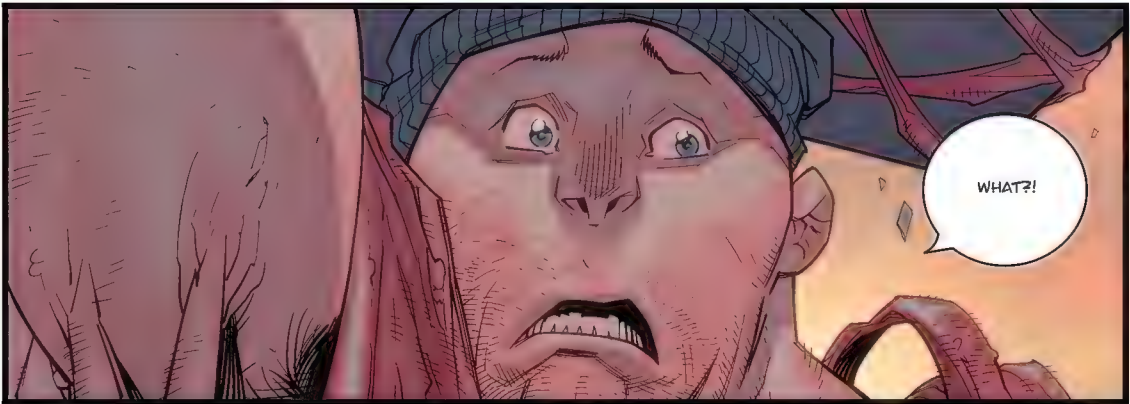
HELLO?!

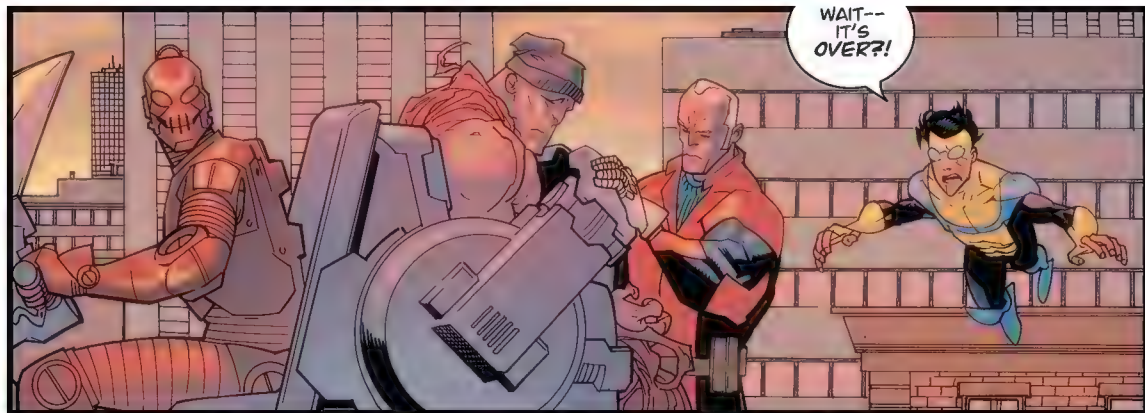
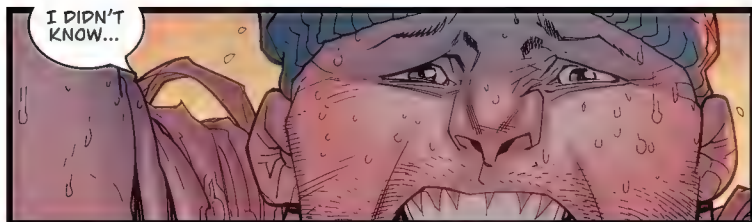
I'M
SERIOUS!!

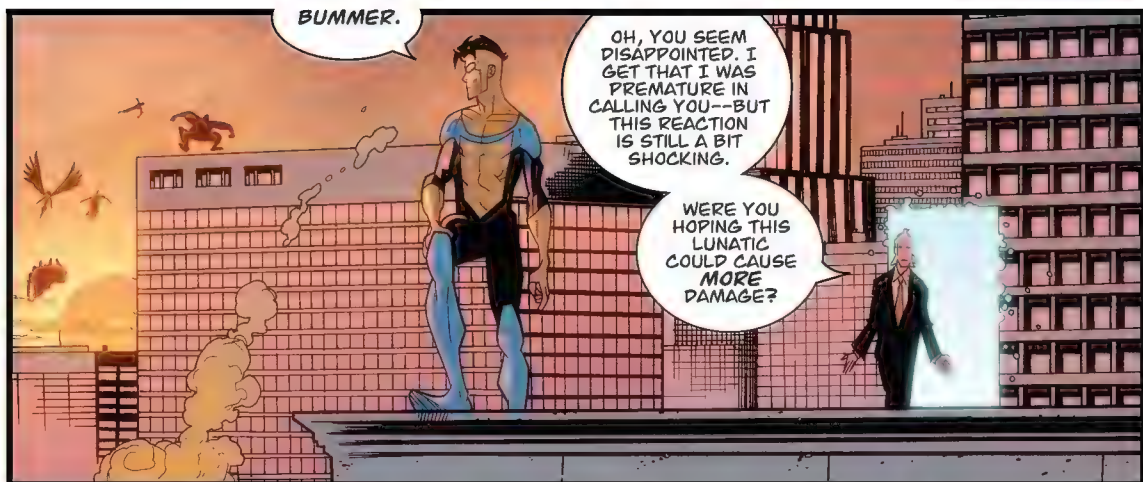
IF YOU'RE
OUT THERE--
IF YOU CAN HEAR
ME! I WANT MY
BODY BACK! I
DEMAND YOU
GIVE IT TO
ME!



I
WANT--!!







BUMMER.

OH, YOU SEEM DISAPPOINTED. I GET THAT I WAS PREMATURE IN CALLING YOU--BUT THIS REACTION IS STILL A BIT SHOCKING.

WERE YOU HOPING THIS LUNATIC COULD CAUSE MORE DAMAGE?

CRAP, THAT'S NOT IT. IT'S JUST-- I DON'T GET UP THIS EARLY VERY OFTEN... IT'S NOT EVEN SIX YET.

I DON'T SLEEP. THAT'S HALF THE REASON I LANDED THIS JOB.

I SIT IN A PUDDLE OF GOO FOR ONE HOUR A DAY, IT KEEPS ME YOUNG.

YOU'RE MAKING THAT UP.

SMART ASS.

WHATEVER, KID.

SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR BEAUTY SLEEP.

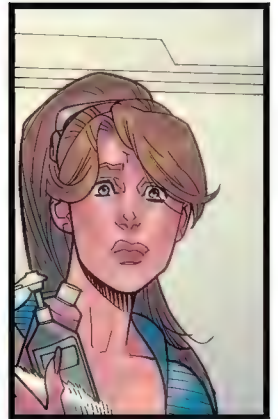
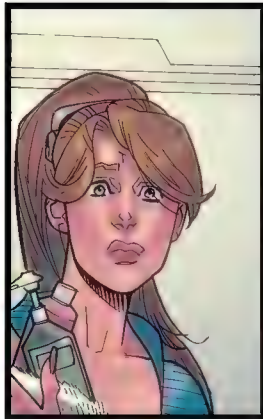
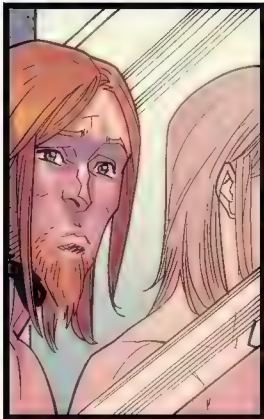
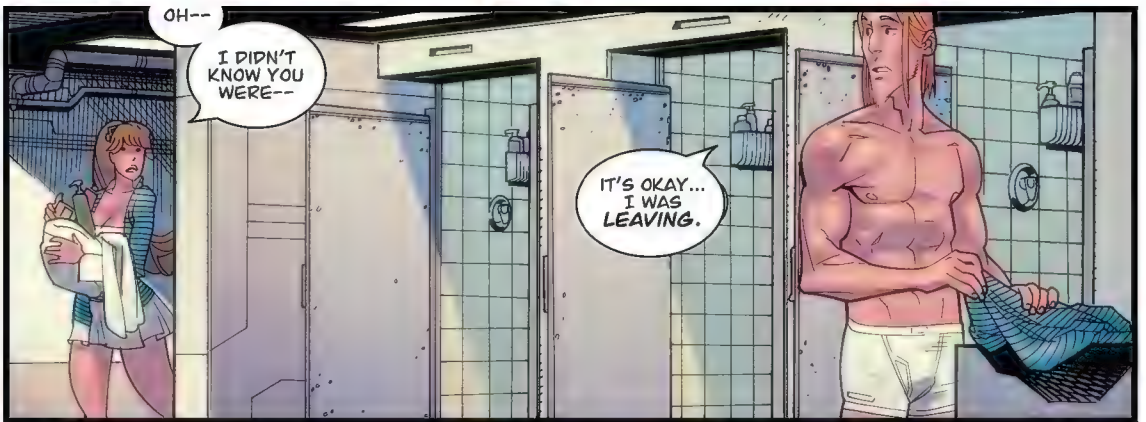
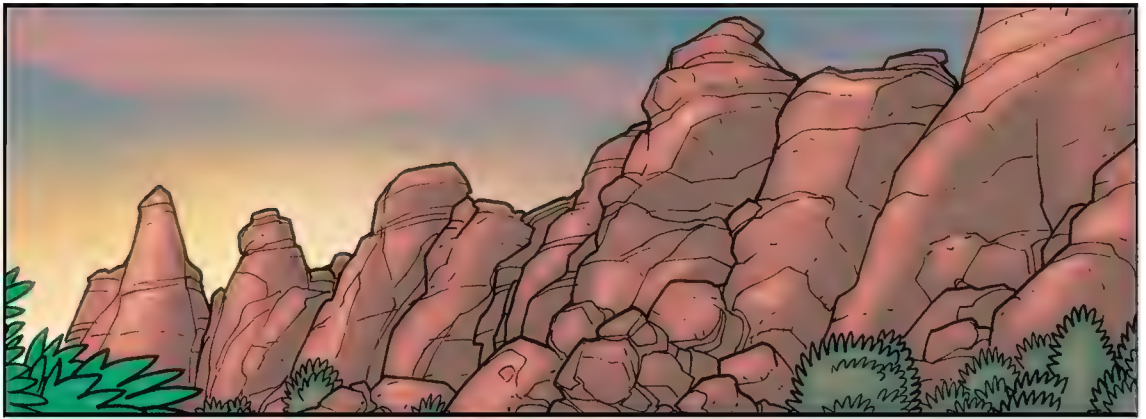
IT'S OKAY.

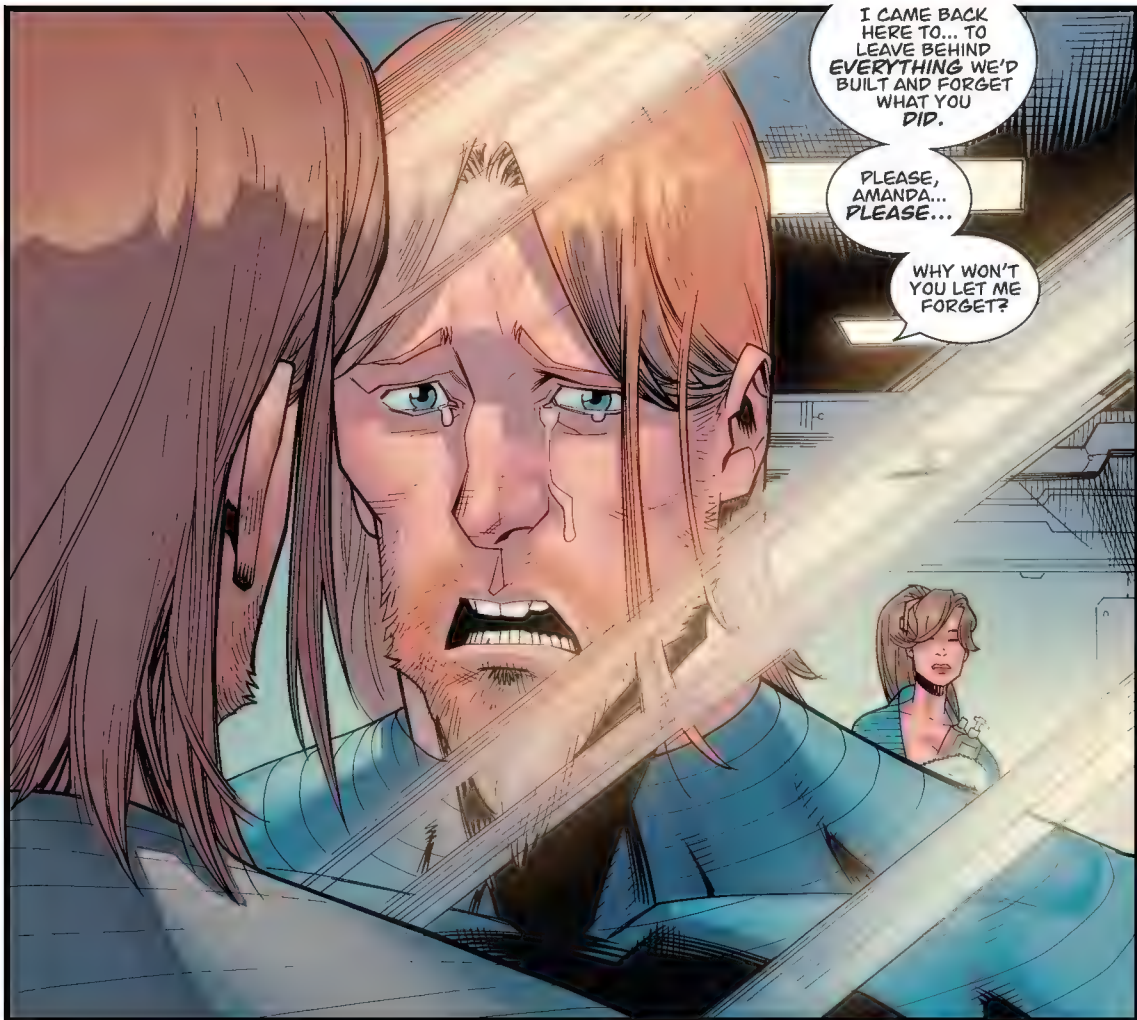
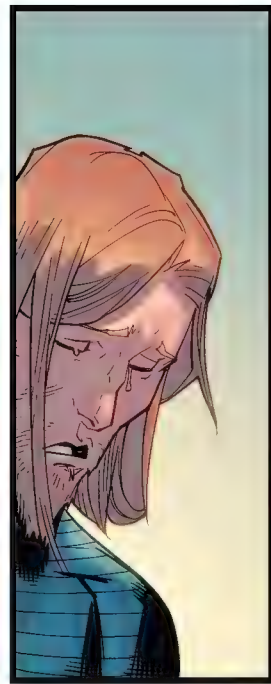
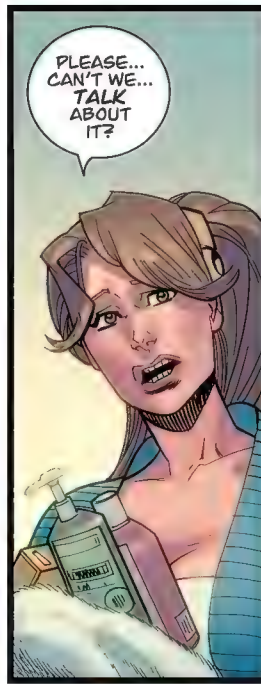
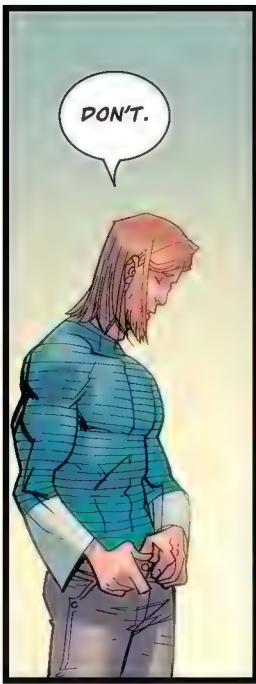
TURNS OUT, I WASN'T NEEDED. THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE HAD THIS ONE HANDLED...

YOU USUALLY IN YOUR SUIT READY TO WORK AT THIS TIME?



GOOD TO KNOW...



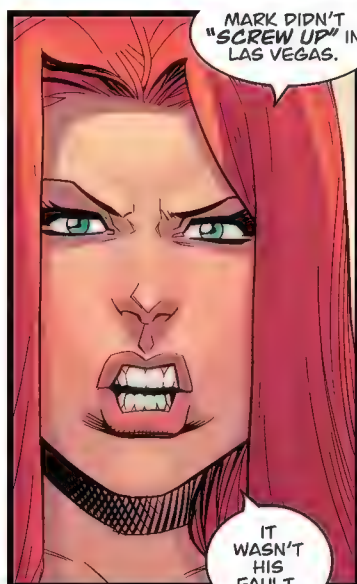
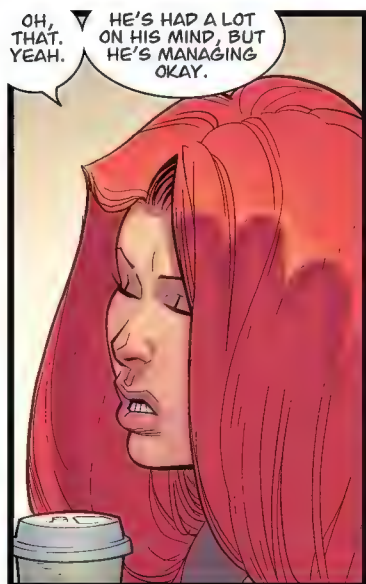
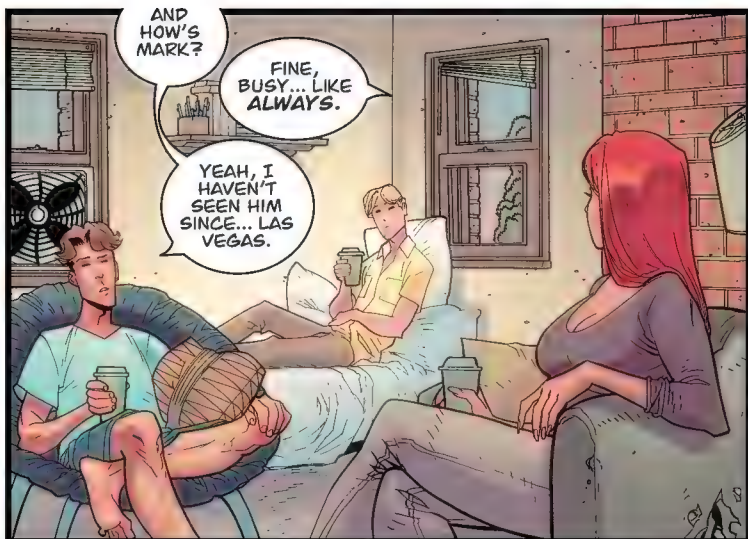




CHAPTER 84



Page 11





WHY DID YOU CALL ME HERE?

I KNOW THIS HAS BEEN GRATING ON YOU, THE DESTRUCTION OF LAS VEGAS... SO I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP FOR YOU TO SEE THAT **SOME** GOOD HAS COME FROM THIS.

ARE THOSE... SOLAR PANELS?

YES. THERE AREN'T ENOUGH RESOURCES TO REBUILD-- WE'RE INCAPABLE OF STARTING THIS CITY OVER FROM SCRATCH.

ALSO, SOME PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT FEEL IT WOULD BE DISRESPECTFUL.

SO YOU'RE GOING TO FOLLOW THAT MANIAC'S PLAN AND COVER THE AREA WITH SOLAR PANELS?

YEAH, IT'S AMAZING! YOU CAN THANK THIS GUY HERE FOR MAKING IT ALL WORK.

OH, I BARELY DID ANYTHING.

ARE YOU KIDDING? THIS GUY HERE BASICALLY INVENTED A DOUBLE-SIDED SOLAR PANEL THAT CAN UTILIZE THE MIRRORED SURFACE OF THE TERRAIN HERE.

HIS SOLAR PANELS ABSORB NEARY **TWICE** AS MUCH SOLAR ENERGY AS STANDARD PANELS.

WHAT A GREAT FIND CHRIS HAS TURNED OUT TO BE. GOOD JOB THERE, INVINCIBLE.

WITH THE WORK HE AND SINCLAIR ARE DOING, THIS SOLAR PANEL ARRAY WILL PROVIDE CHEAP, CLEAN ENERGY FOR NEARLY **HALF** OF THE CITIZENS IN THIS COUNTRY.

AND ITS CONSTRUCTION IS A PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT THAT IS EMPLOYING **THOUSANDS**.

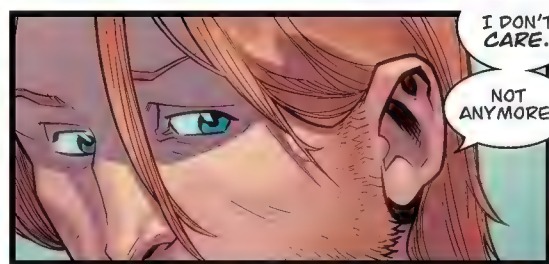
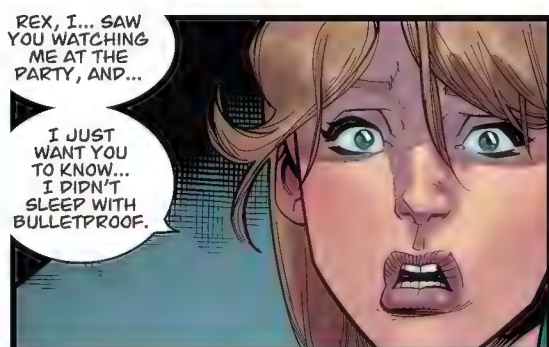
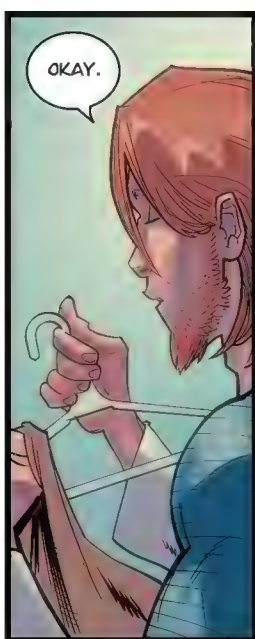
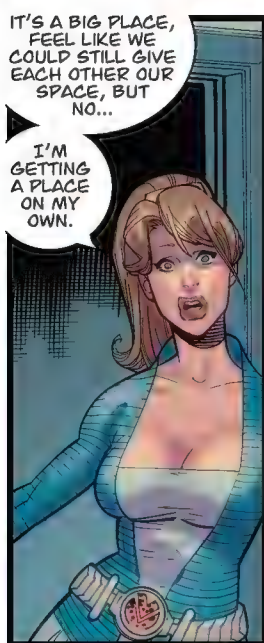
WHOA...

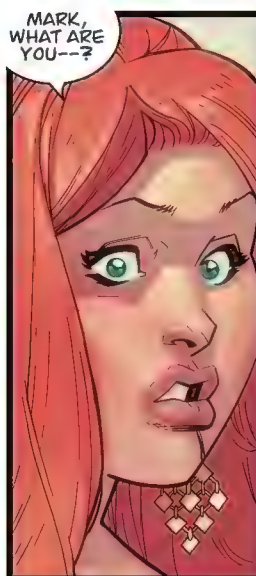
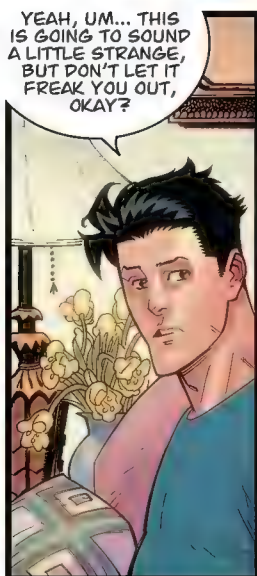
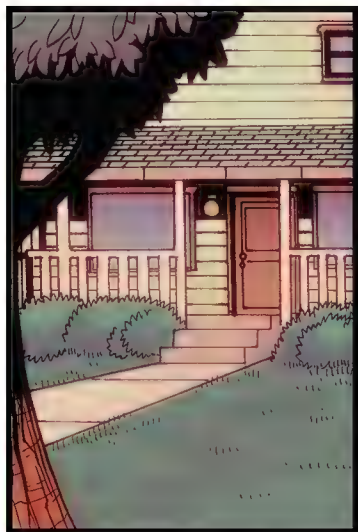
...DINOSAURUS
WAS RIGHT.

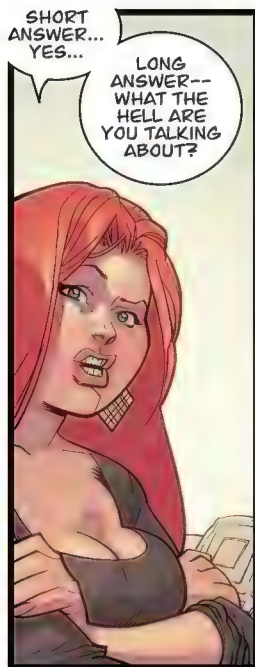
WHAT
WAS
THAT?

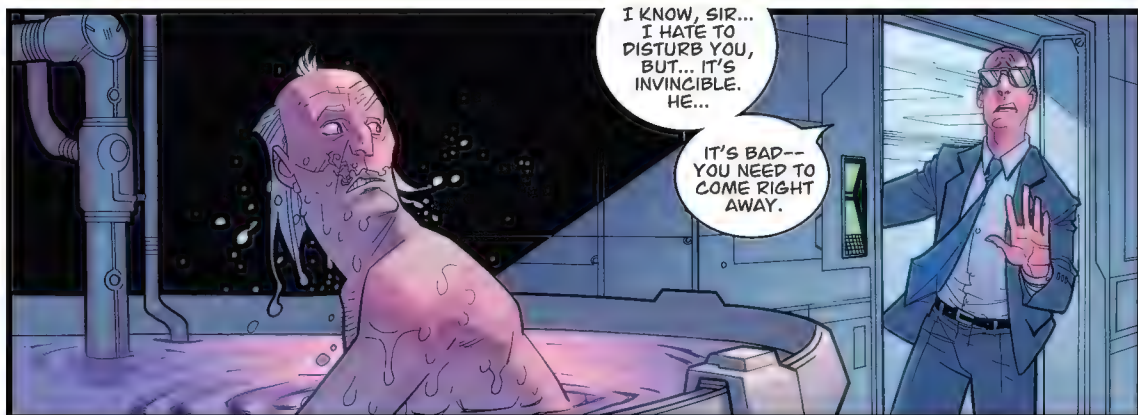
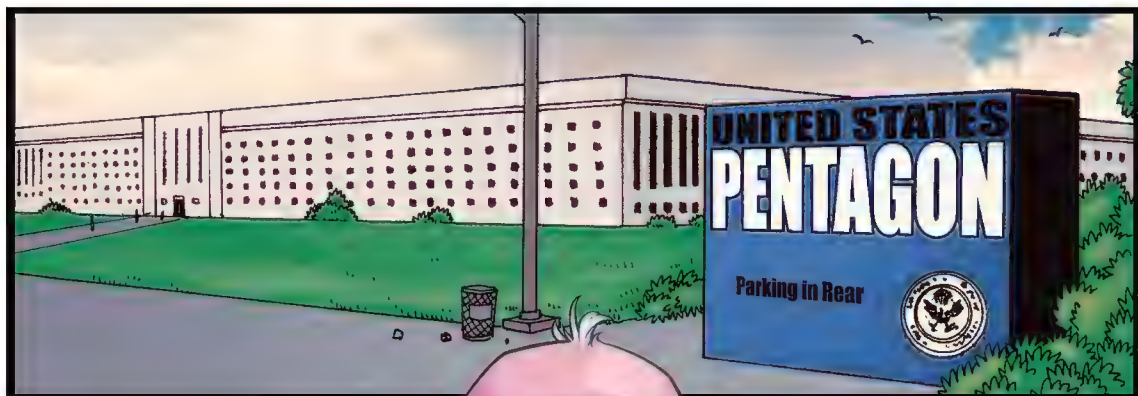
NOTHING...





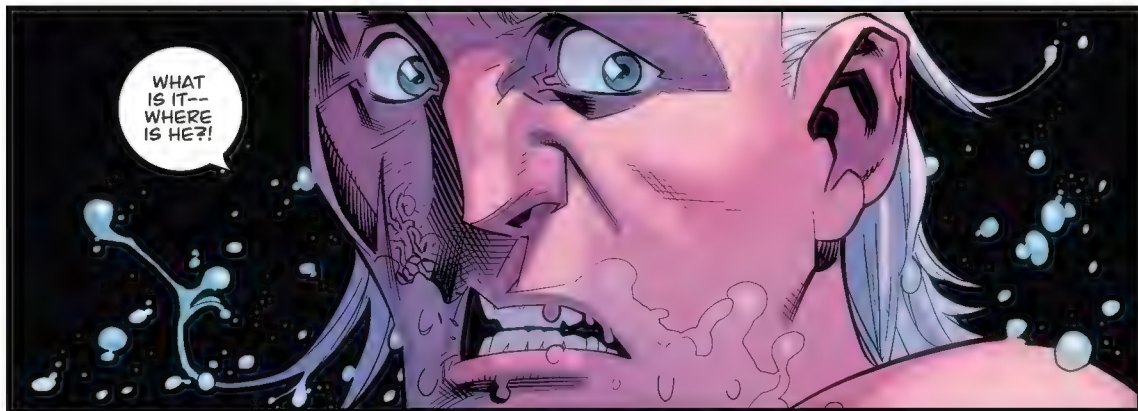






I KNOW, SIR...
I HATE TO
DISTURB YOU,
BUT... IT'S
INVINCIBLE.
HE...

IT'S BAD--
YOU NEED TO
COME RIGHT
AWAY.



WHAT
IS IT--
WHERE
IS HE?!

UM...
ARE YOU,
LIKE--
HERE
TO KILL
ME?

NO, I'M...
HERE
TO **SAVE**
YOU.





SAVE ME FROM WHAT?

LIKE, I'M TOTALLY SAFE HERE, MAN.



THAT'S WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO THINK. I'M HERE TO BRING OUT YOUR DINOSAURUS FORM-- BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

SO... WHAT TURNS YOU, DO I NEED TO MAKE YOU MAD OR SOMETHING?



NO, IT'S INTERFERENCE... THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME TURN.

WHAT?

Y'KNOW... NOT CARING ABOUT SOMETHING... THAT'S WHY THEY HAVE ALL THIS STUFF IN HERE-- TO KEEP ME, LIKE... INTERESTED IN THINGS AT ALL TIMES.



YOU MEAN INDIFFERENCE?

YEAH, MAN-- THAT'S IT. WHAT YOU SAID.

YOU GOTTA MAKE ME NOT CARE ABOUT SOMETHING BEFORE THEY GET IN HERE! SAVE ME!

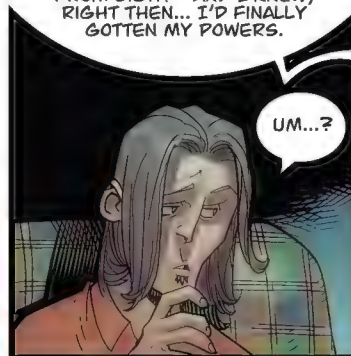
WHEN I WAS LIKE... EIGHT YEARS OLD, MY DAD SAT ME DOWN... FOR Y'KNOW, THE TALK. THE TALK WHERE HE EXPLAINS THAT HE'S A SUPERHERO AND THAT SOME DAY YOU'RE GOING TO INHERIT HIS POWERS. SO, FROM THAT POINT ON, I WAS JUST SORT OF COUNTING THE DAYS UNTIL MY POWERS KICKED IN... I WAS EXCITED AT FIRST, BUT AFTER A WHILE, I JUST STOPPED THINKING ABOUT IT. I KIND OF GAVE UP.

BY THE TIME I WAS SEVENTEEN I HAD A PART TIME JOB AT BURGER MART, WHICH WAS JUST AS BAD AS YOU'D IMAGINE. I'D LONG SINCE GIVEN UP ON GETTING POWERS. BUT ONE DAY, AFTER WORK, I WAS TAKING THE TRASH OUT--DRAGGING TWO BIG BAGS. LIKE EVERY DAY I'D DONE IT BEFORE, I USED ALL MY MIGHT--IN THE HOPES THAT THE BAG WOULD MAKE IT UP INTO THE DUMPSTER. AFTER I THREW IT, IT SOARED HIGH INTO THE AIR, DISAPPEARING FROM SIGHT--AND I KNEW, RIGHT THEN... I'D FINALLY GOTTEN MY POWERS.

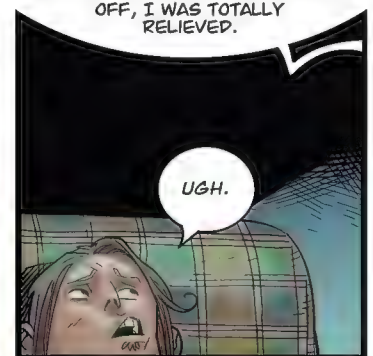
LATER THAT NIGHT, I WAS ON MY ROOF. YOU SEE, ASIDE FROM THE SUPER-STRENGTH THAT ALLOWED ME TO SLING THAT TRASH BAG TO SPACE MY FATHER ALSO POSSESSED THE ABILITY TO FLY. SO I THOUGHT, JUMPING OFF THE ROOF WOULD REALLY BE A GOOD WAY TO FORCE MYSELF TO NATURALLY LEARN THAT ABILITY. I WAS ONLY ONE STORY UP, SO THE FALL WOULDN'T HURT ME TOO BAD. I WAS PLAYING IT SAFE, STILL--WHEN I NOTICED I WAS ACTUALLY HOVERING NEXT TO MY ROOF AFTER JUMPING OFF, I WAS TOTALLY RELIEVED.



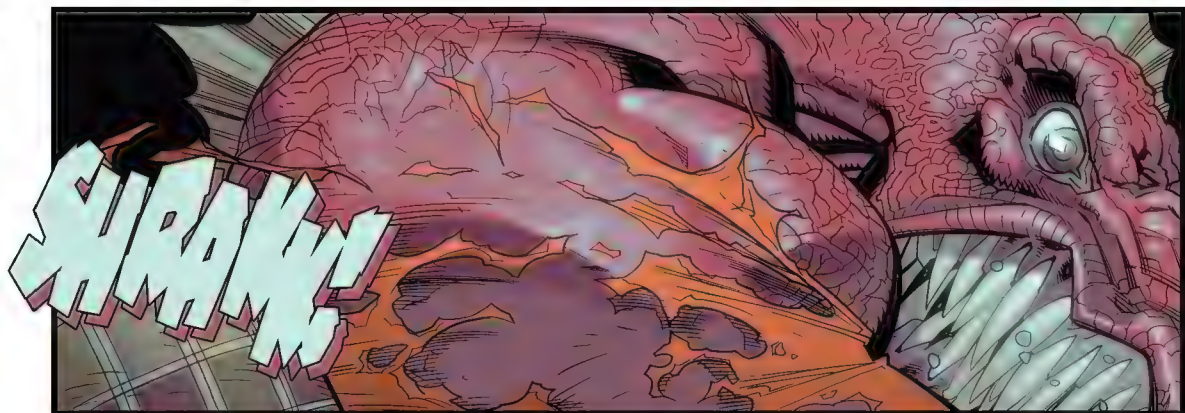
WAIT, WHAT ARE YOU--?



UM...?



UGH.



THEY ACTUALLY
HAD ME CONTAINED,
THERE WAS LITTLE
HOPE OF ME
ESCAPING MY
FRAIL, PATHETIC,
ALTERED
FORM.

YOU'RE SMART
ENOUGH TO KNOW
THAT. YOU'RE
SMART ENOUGH TO NOT
TO DO THIS SIMPLY
TO PICK A FIGHT
WITH ME...

...SO AS
UNBELIEVABLE
AS IT MAY SOUND,
THE MOST LOGICAL
EXPLANATION IS
THAT YOU'VE COME
AROUND TO MY WAY
OF THINKING AND
ARE HERE TO
HELP ME...

BUT
THAT'S
INSANE...
RIGHT?

WELL...



I HAVE TO ADMIT,
YOUR METHODS
ARE INEXCUSABLE...
TO THE POINT THAT
IT'S... **HARD** TO
JUST STAND
HERE AND TALK
TO YOU.

YOU'VE
KILLED SO
MANY PEOPLE,
DESTROYED
HOMES... AN
ENTIRE
CITY...



ALL WORTHY
SACRIFICES
FOR THE
GREATER
GOOD.

AS I RECALL,
WHEN YOUR FATHER
ATTEMPTED TO TAKE
OVER THIS PLANET,
YOU FOUGHT HIM--
AND IN THE PROCESS
SOME LIVES
WERE LOST.

WHAT I
DID WAS NO
DIFFERENT.



IT WASN'T
REMOVELY--
NO, THIS ISN'T
THE TIME FOR
THIS. WHAT I'M
GETTING AT--
WHAT I'M
HERE FOR...

I'VE BEEN
DOING THIS, BEING
INVINCIBLE FOR A
WHILE NOW, AND I
HAVE THESE POWERS
AND I DO WHAT I
DO... TO USE
THEM TO **HELP**
PEOPLE.

I LOOK BACK
AFTER ALL THIS
TIME AND I THINK...
WELL, I DON'T KNOW
THAT I AM, Y'KNOW...
HELPING PEOPLE--
MAKING THE WORLD
BETTER... AND I
FEEL LIKE THAT'S
WHAT I SHOULD
BE DOING.

I'M
MAINTAINING
THE STATUS
QUO AT BEST,
PUTTING OUT
FIRES...



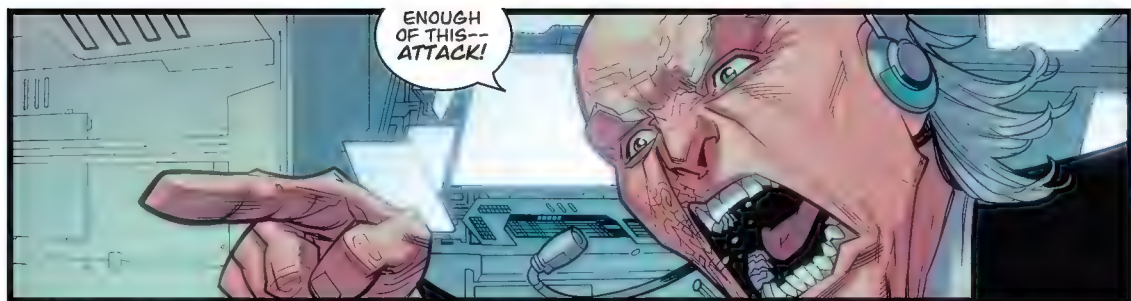
MY SOLAR PANEL ARRAY
IS BEING BUILT, ISN'T IT?
CHEAP ENERGY FOR THE
MASSES... A BETTER
LIFE FOR SOME.
SMALL... BUT A
DIFFERENCE.

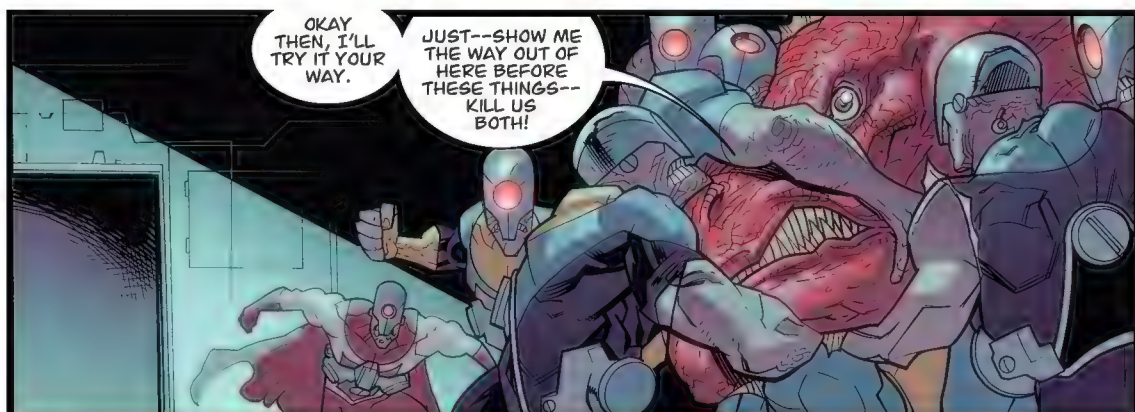
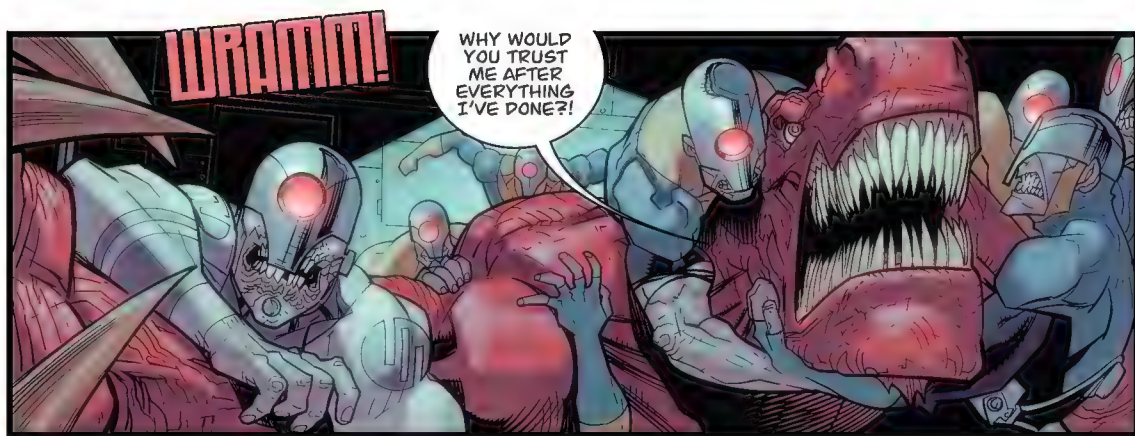
MUCH
BETTER
THAN SAVING
A BRIDGE OR
PUNCHING A
BANK ROBBER,
RIGHT?



YES, BUT YOUR METHODS...
I THINK, IF WE WERE TO
WORK TOGETHER, WE COULD
DO THINGS THAT ACTUALLY
MATTERED. WE COULD
SAVE THE WORLD--
WITHOUT KILLING
ANYONE.

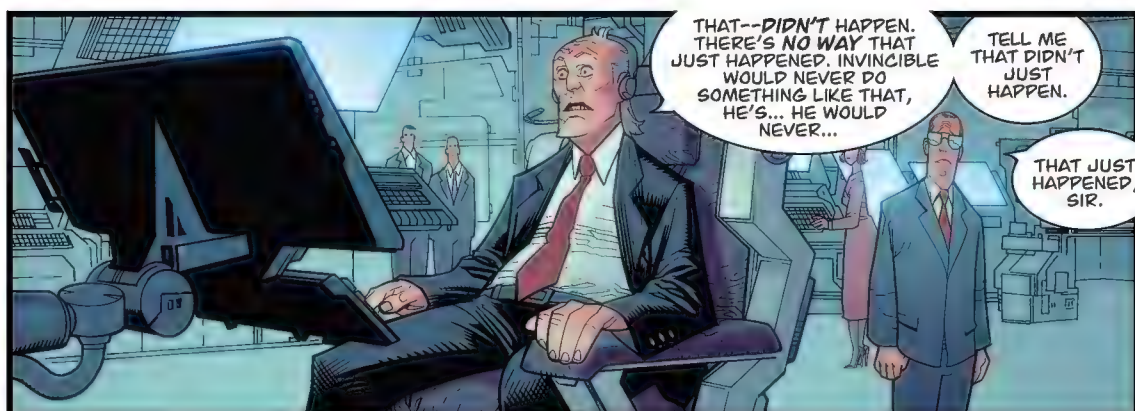
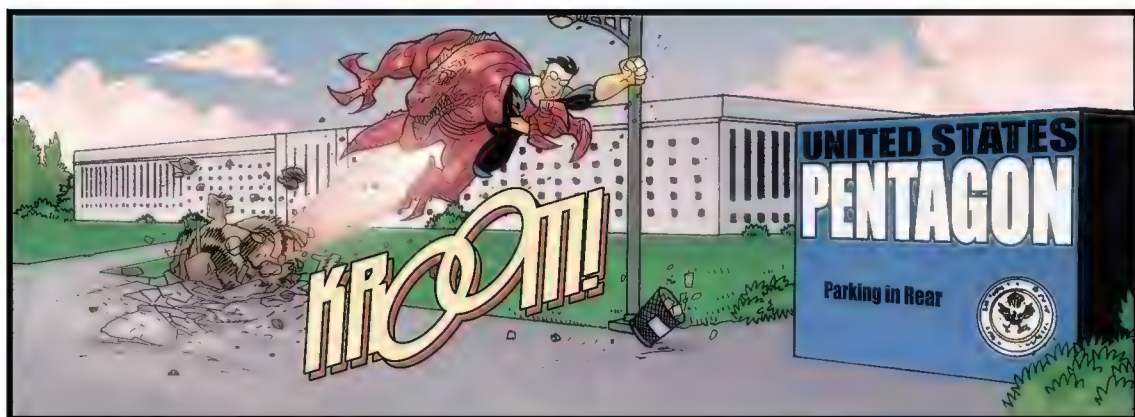
IF YOU'D BE
WILLING TO LET
ME HELP YOU-- SO
THAT NO ONE HAD TO
DIE... I'LL HELP YOU
ESCAPE, AND I'LL
HELP YOU MAKE A
DIFFERENCE.

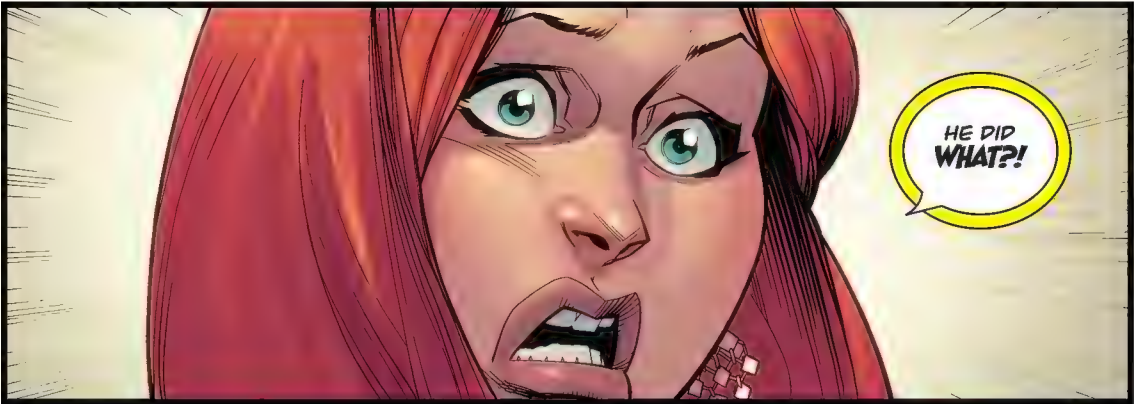
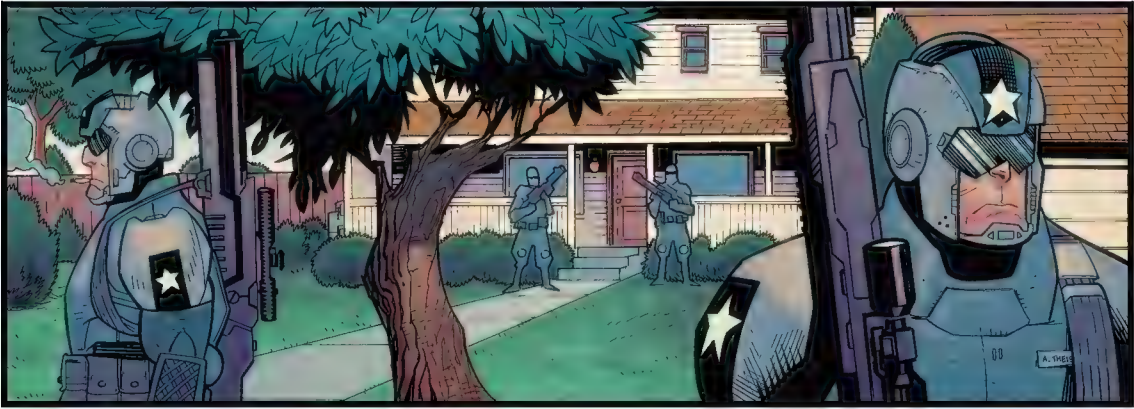
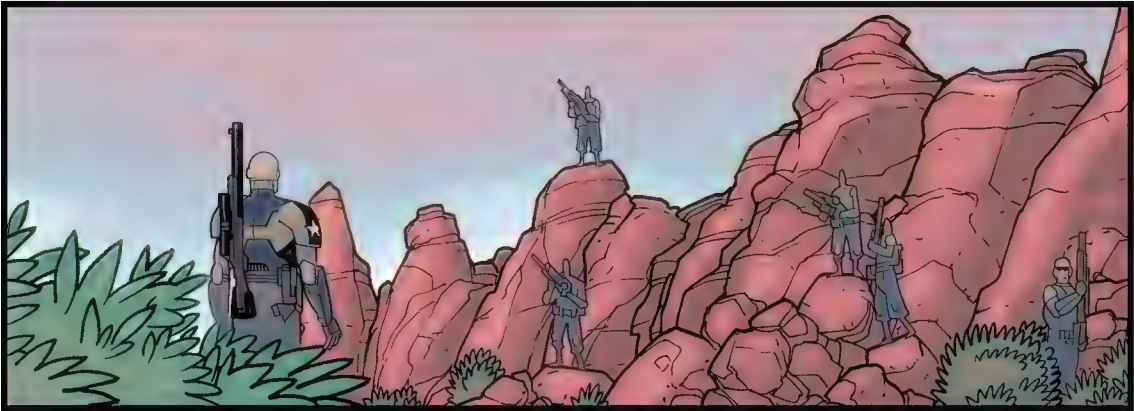


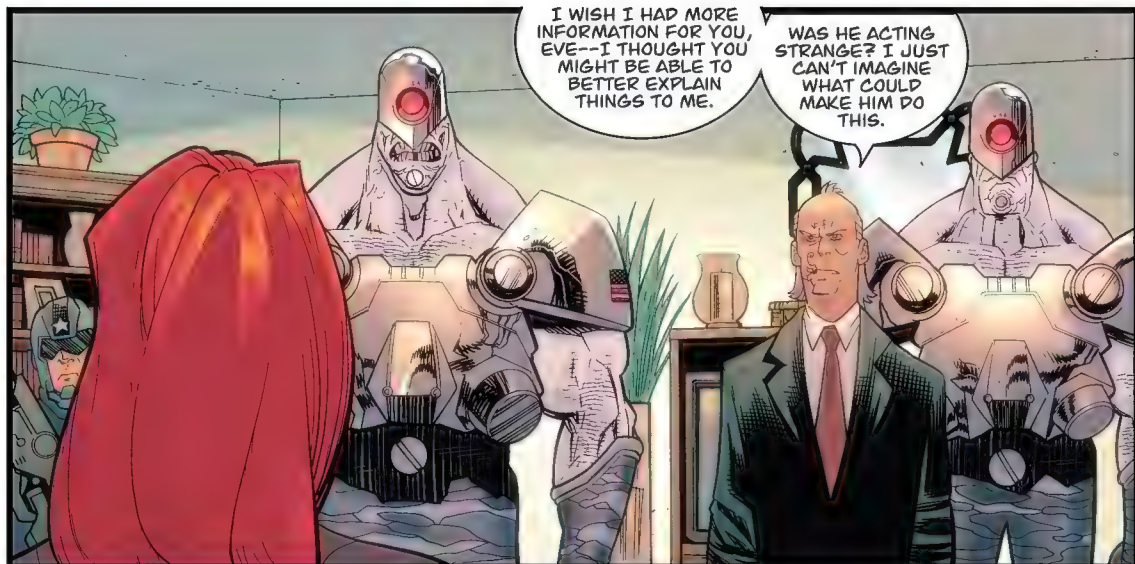


THIS
WAY.









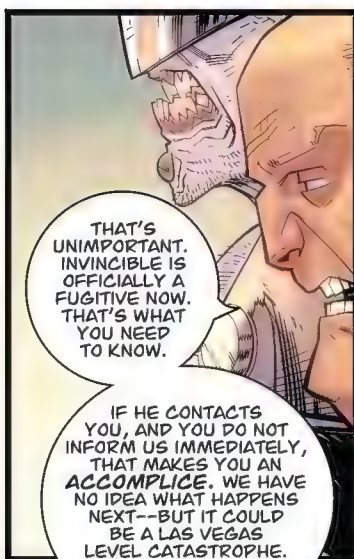
I WISH I HAD MORE INFORMATION FOR YOU, EVE-- I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO BETTER EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME.

WAS HE ACTING STRANGE? I JUST CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT COULD MAKE HIM DO THIS.



NO, NOT AT ALL-- HE... TOLD ME HE MIGHT BE DOING SOMETHING CRAZY, BUT ALSO THAT HE **KNEW** IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO...

I THINK I GAVE HIM **PERMISSION** TO DO THIS... THAT'S WHY HE WAS TELLING ME.



THAT'S UNIMPORTANT. INVINCIBLE IS OFFICIALLY A FUGITIVE NOW. THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

IF HE CONTACTS YOU, AND YOU DO NOT INFORM US IMMEDIATELY, THAT MAKES YOU AN **ACCOMPLICE**. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENS NEXT--BUT IT COULD BE A LAS VEGAS LEVEL CATASTROPHE.



YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. MARK WOULD NEVER ALLOW SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO HAPPEN.

YOU DON'T REALLY THINK HE'S CAPABLE OF THAT, DO YOU?

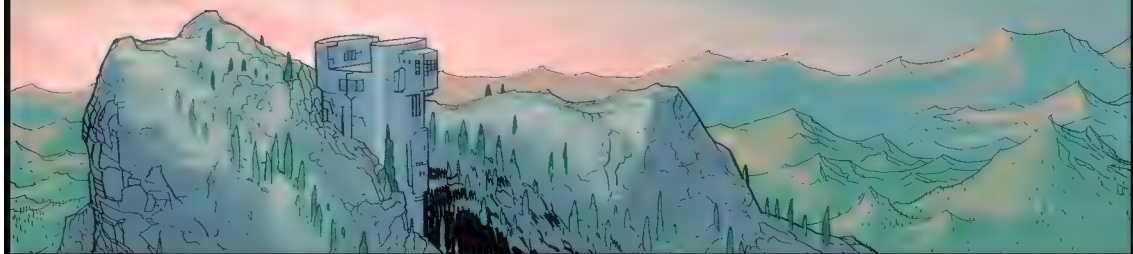


I HAVE **NO IDEA** WHAT HE'S CAPABLE OF AT THIS POINT.

WE NEED TO COME TO THE REALIZATION THAT HE MAY HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR HIS FATHER THIS WHOLE TIME...

...THIS COULD MEAN THE END FOR US ALL.

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION,
THE SECRET BASE
OF DINOSAURUS.



READY
TO GET
STARTED?

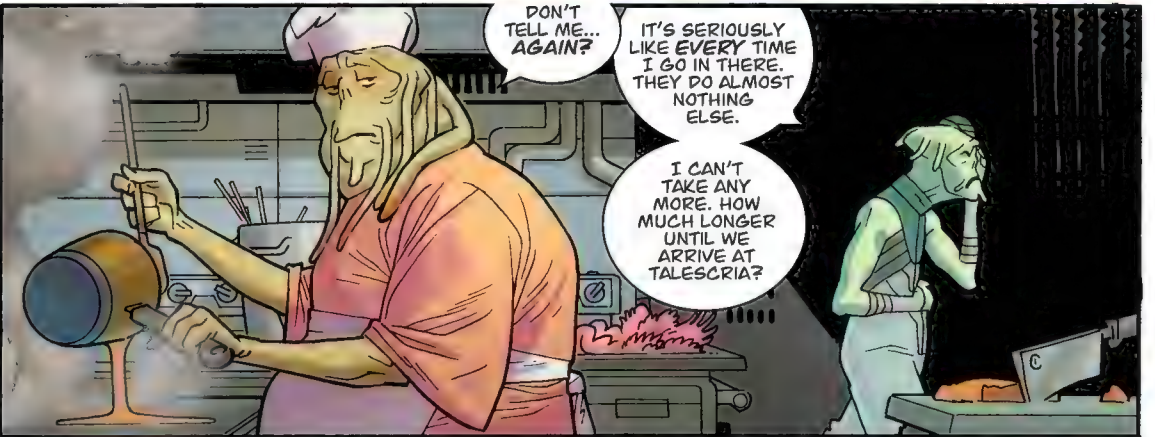
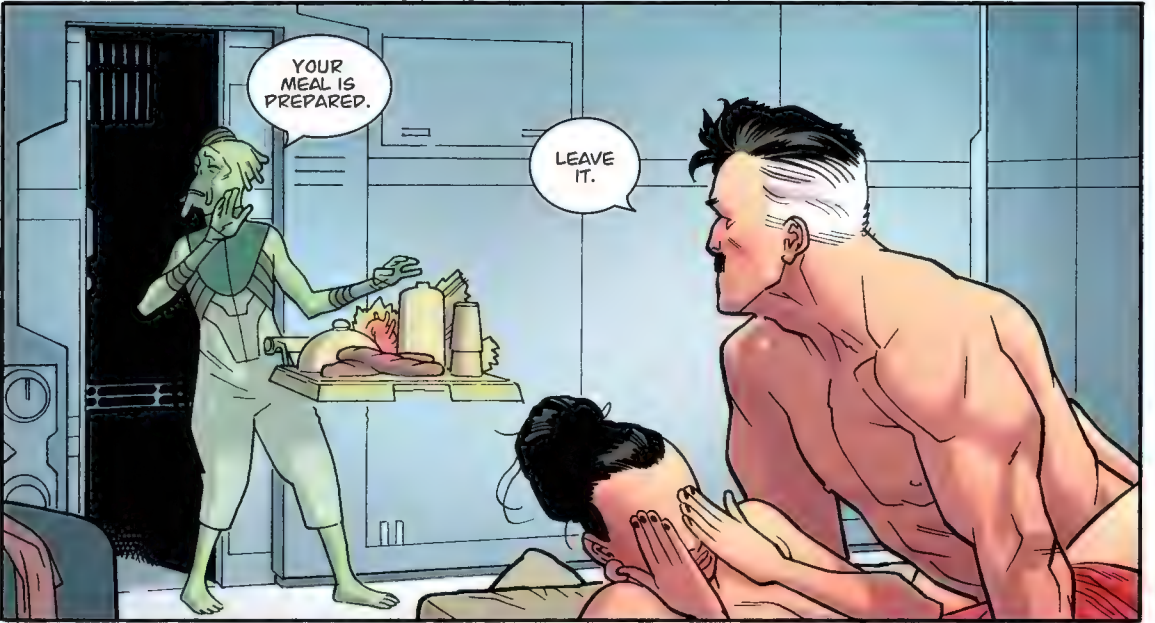
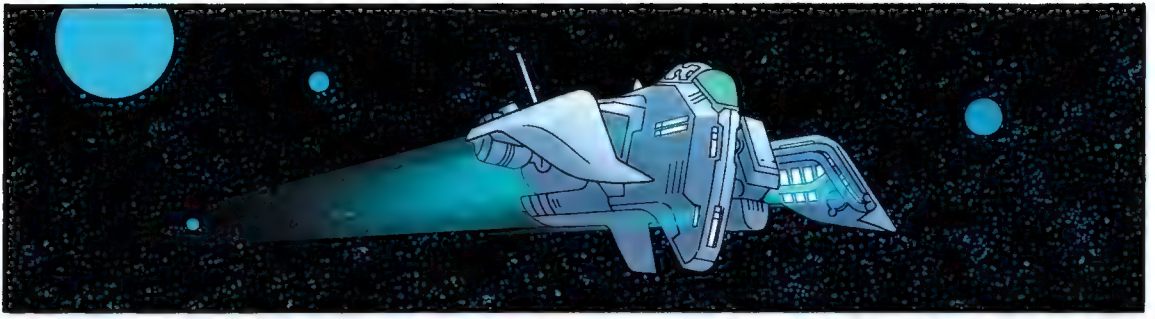
YEAH.

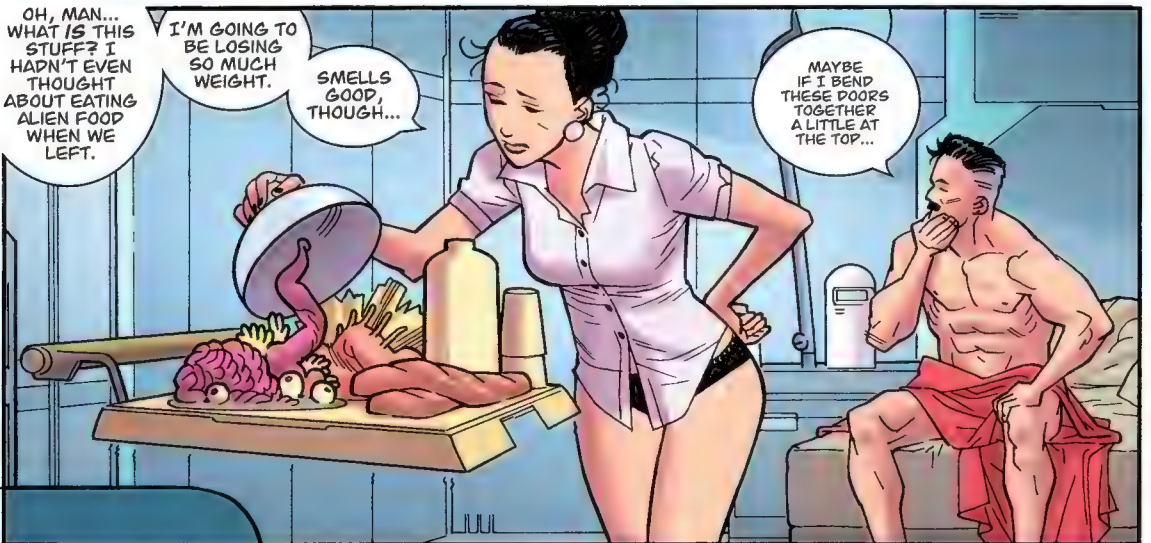
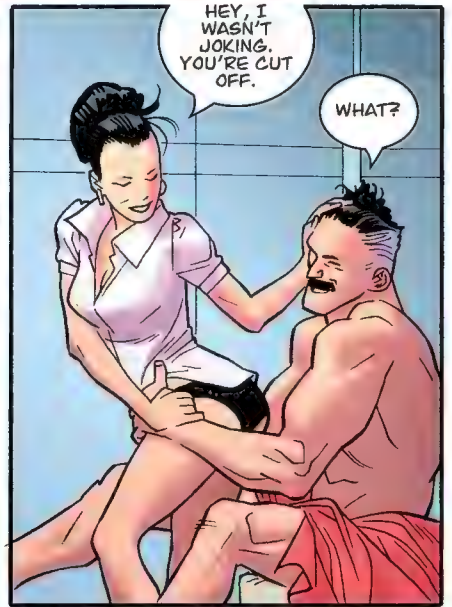
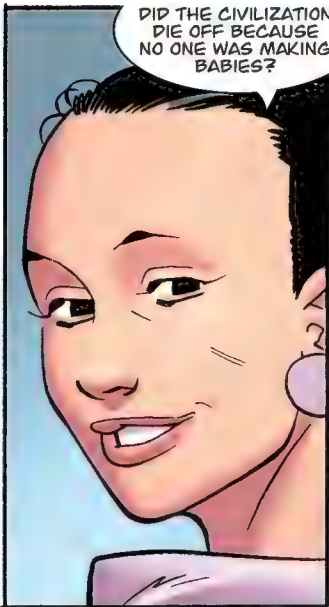
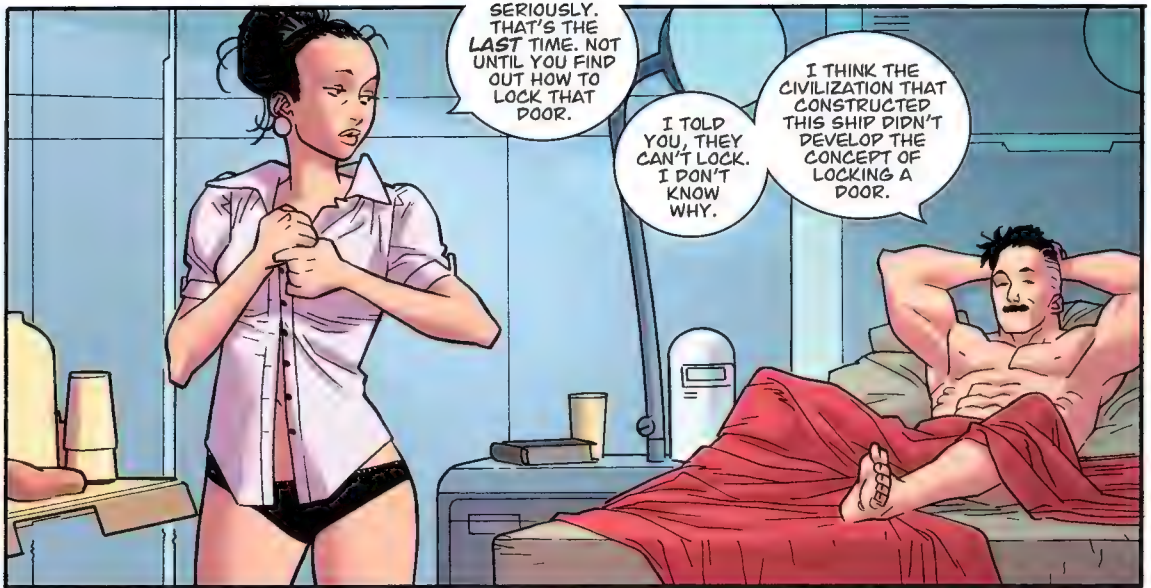
LET'S
SAVE THE
WORLD.



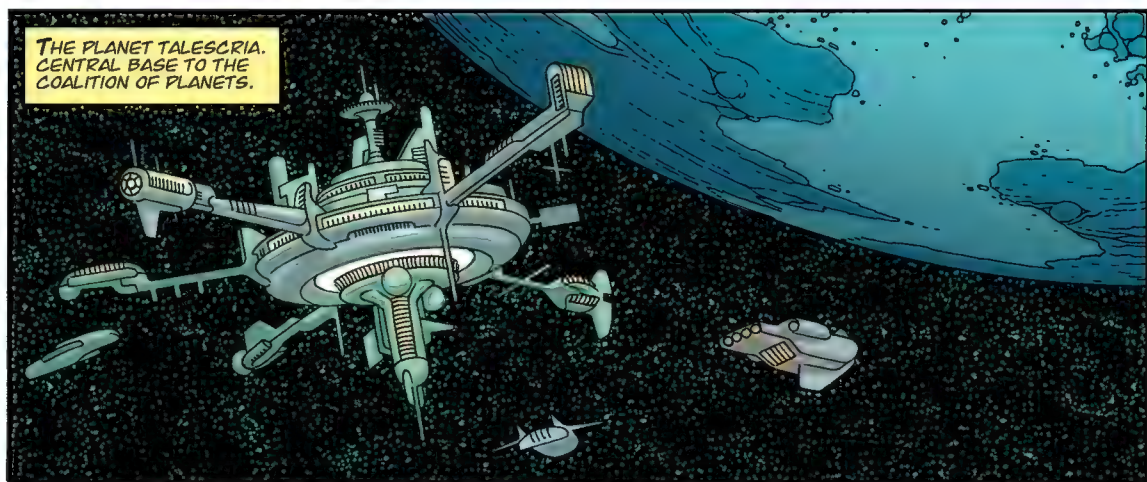
CHAPTER 85







THE PLANET TALESORIA.
CENTRAL BASE TO THE
COALITION OF PLANETS.



SERIOUSLY, HE HAS
TO GO. EVER SINCE
HE WALKED IN ON US
YOU JUST HAVEN'T
BEEN THE SAME.

YOU'VE BEEN
HOLDING BACK
ON ME--ADMIT IT.
WHO CARES WHAT
HE SAW? HE
KNOWS WHAT
PEOPLE DO!

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
WHY HE CAN'T
JUST STAY AT
NOLAN'S PLACE
UNTIL HE
GETS
BACK!

HE'S JUST A
KID. I CAN'T
LEAVE HIM
ALONE IN THIS
CITY.

NOLAN
WOULD BE
PISSED.

STILL A KID?! I CAN'T
STAND THESE ALIEN
RACES THAT SPEND A
QUARTER OF THEIR
LIFESPAN AS
"KIDS!"

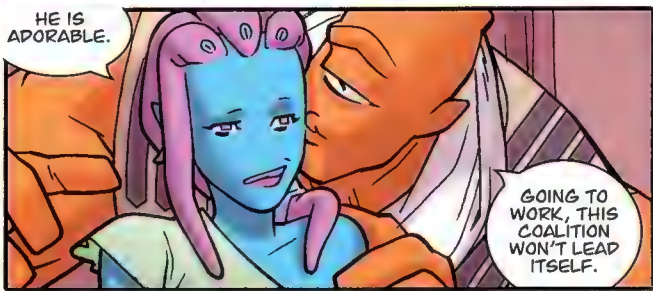
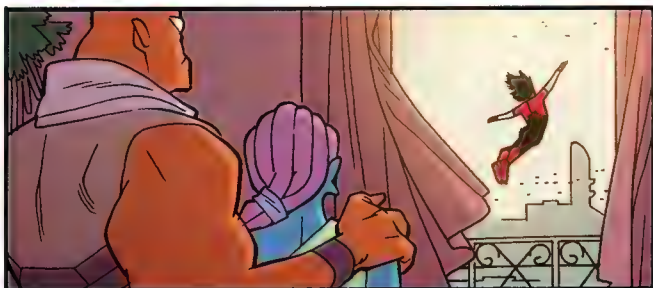
I HAVEN'T
SEEN MY
PARENTS
SINCE I WAS
THREE.

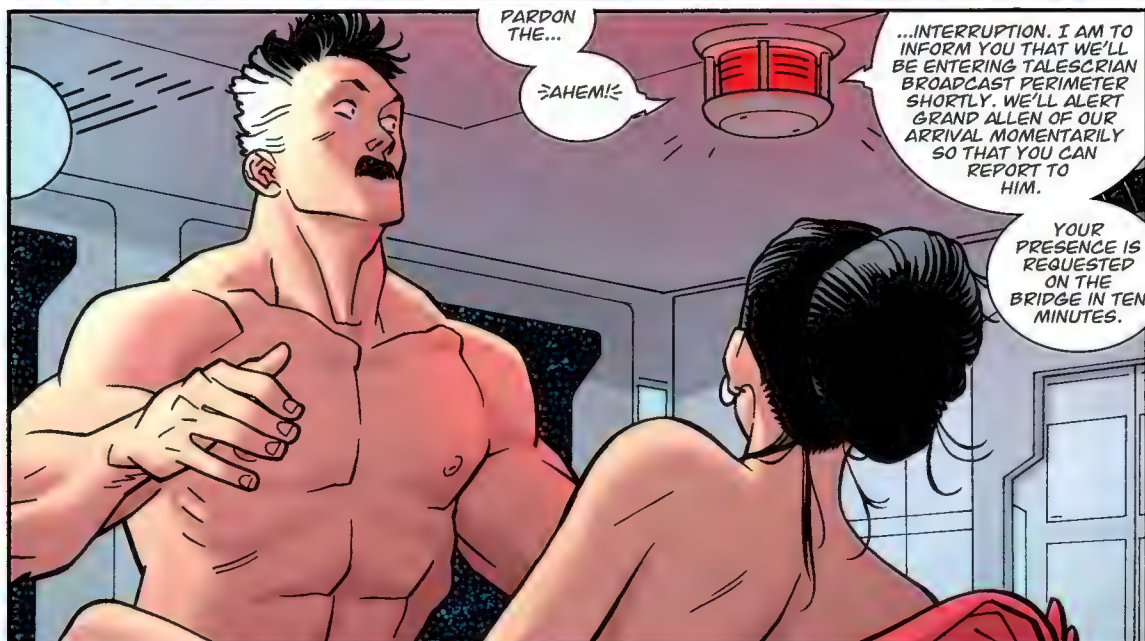
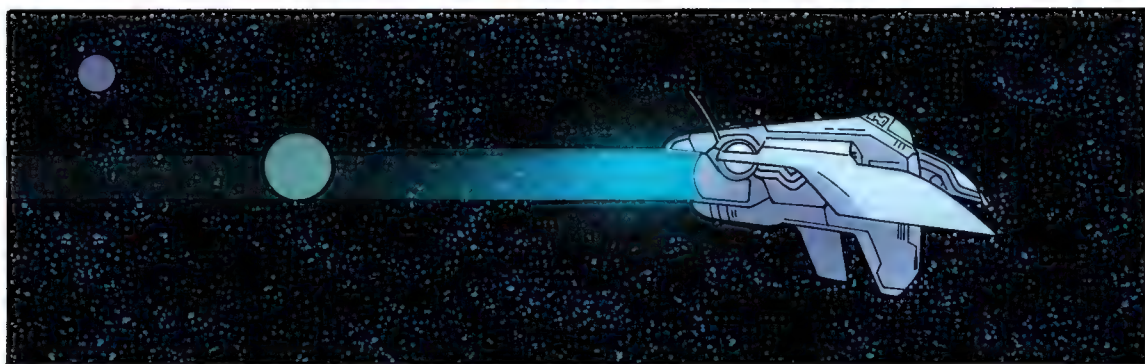
THE BOY
NEEDS HIS
HAND HELD SO
I HAVE TO
SUFFER?

JUST
LISTEN TO
YOURSELF,
TELIA.

SOMETIMES
I'M RELIEVED
THAT OUR
SPECIES CAN'T
PRODUCE
OFFSPRING
TOGETHER.

...
NOT
COOL,
ALLEN.
NOT
COOL.



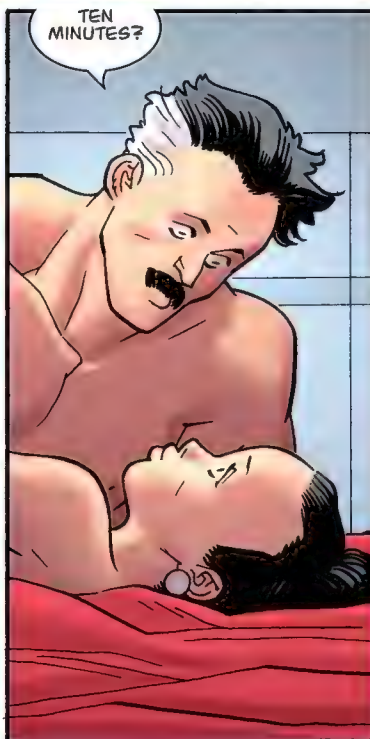
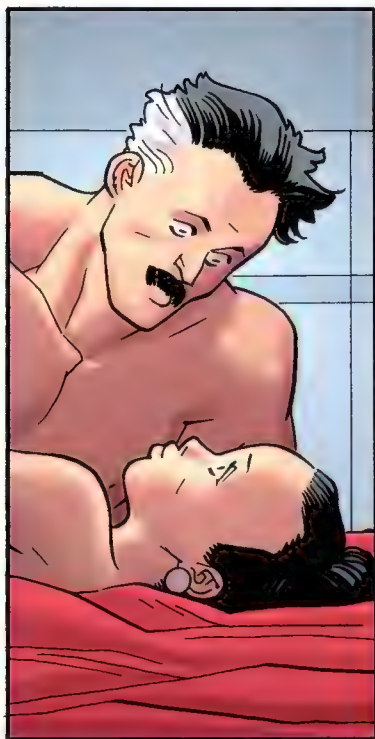


PARDON
THE...

SAHEM!

...INTERRUPTION. I AM TO
INFORM YOU THAT WE'LL
BE ENTERING TALESERIAN
BROADCAST PERIMETER
SHORTLY. WE'LL ALERT
GRAND ALLEN OF OUR
ARRIVAL MOMENTARILY
SO THAT YOU CAN
REPORT TO
HIM.

YOUR
PRESENCE IS
REQUESTED
ON THE
BRIDGE IN TEN
MINUTES.



TEN
MINUTES?



FINE,
FINE...
JUST
HURRY UP
ALREADY.



I EXPECT
PROGRESS!

SOMETHING
MUST BE
DONE!



I'M DOING
EVERYTHING
I CAN,
AMBASSADOR.

I HAVE
PATROL TEAMS
CRISSCROSSING
THE GALAXY,
LOOKING FOR ANY
SIGN OF THE
VILTRUMITES.

ON A HUNCH,
ONE TEAM WENT
TO A DISTANT PLANET
CALLED EARTH. THE
VILTRUMITES HAVE A
SPECIAL INTEREST IN
THAT PLANET... THEY
MAY HAVE GONE THERE,
BUT I HAVEN'T
HEARD BACK FROM
THAT TEAM.



YOU HAVEN'T
HEARD FROM
THEM? HOW DO
YOU KNOW THEY
HAVEN'T FOUND THE
VILTRUMITES AND
BEEN KILLED BY
THEM, HOW LONG
HAVE THEY
BEEN AWAY?



THE PLANET IS SO DISTANT
WE CAN'T SEND OR RECEIVE
TRANSMISSIONS. IF OUR
CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT,
AND THEY TRAVELED THERE
AND CAME STRAIGHT BACK...
THEY WOULD HAVE
RETURNED A FEW
DAYS AGO.

IF WE
DON'T HEAR
FROM THEM
SOON, I'LL
SEND--



I'M SORRY TO
INTERRUPT, GREAT
ALLEN, BUT THERE'S
A TOP PRIORITY
TRANSMISSION
COMING IN FROM
THE EDGE OF
BROADCAST
RANGE.

WHOA,
NEAT! I
THINK
THAT'S
THEM!



THEY'RE ON EARTH?!

AND YOU JUST LEFT THEM THERE... AND YOU WANT TO LET THEM STAY THERE?

IT WAS AN AGREEMENT, ALLEN. MARK AND I DIDN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE.

I DON'T KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT THIS.

WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE THEM THERE. WE CAN'T ALLOW--



IT'S DONE, ALLEN. THEY'RE ON EARTH-- THEY'RE ALL OVER THE PLANET. WE DO ANYTHING TO THEM NOW AND WE DOOM THAT ENTIRE CIVILIZATION.

A DEAL WAS MADE. YOU NEED TO HONOR IT.



...



WE'LL HAVE TO DISCUSS THIS MORE IN PERSON. I'M UNDER A LOT OF PRESSURE HERE FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE COALITION AND...

WHEN DO YOU ARRIVE?



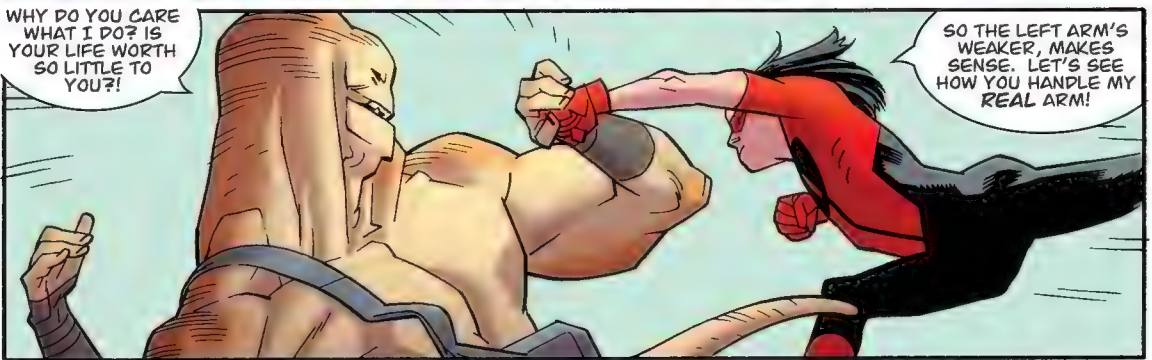
WE WILL ARRIVE IN A MATTER OF HOURS, GREAT ALLEN.

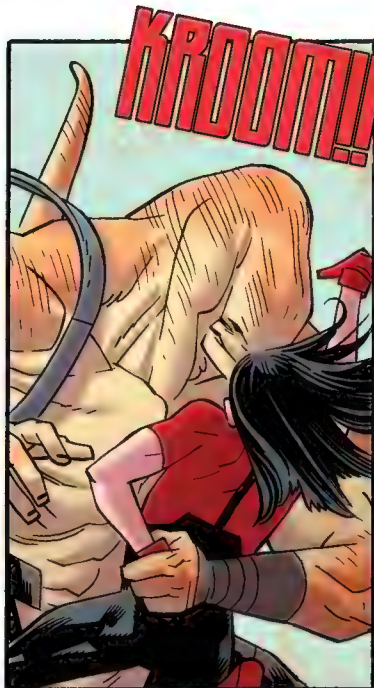


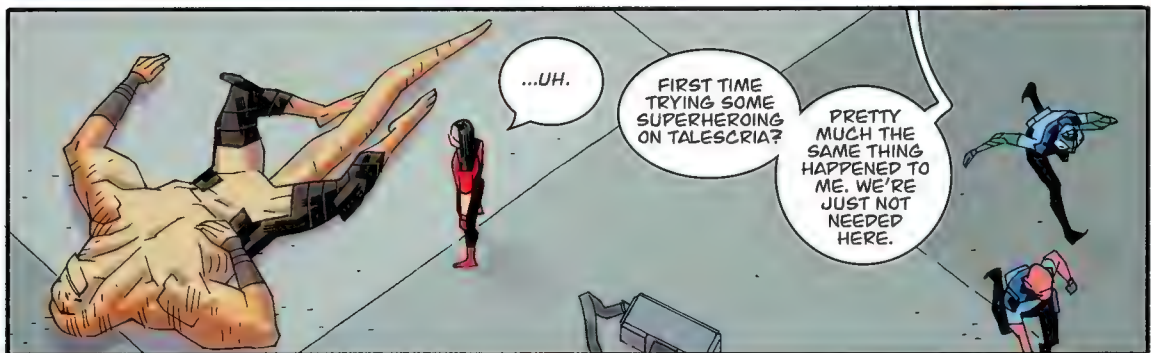
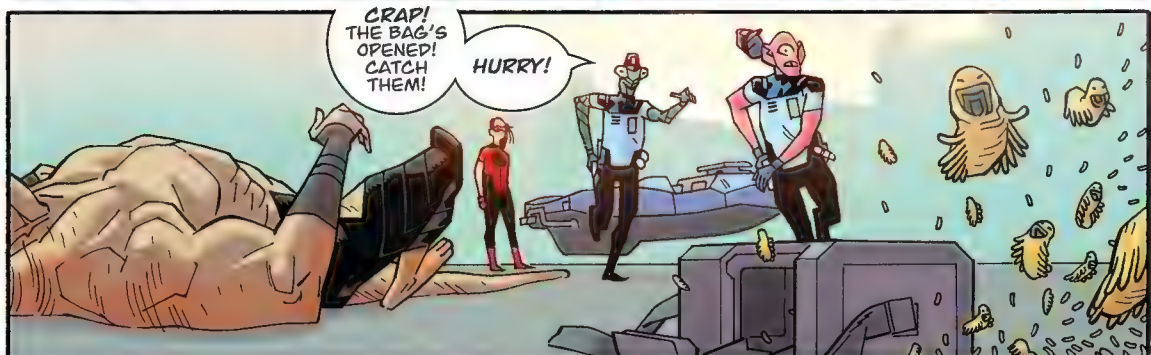
GREAT. I'LL PREPARE TO RECEIVE YOU THEN.

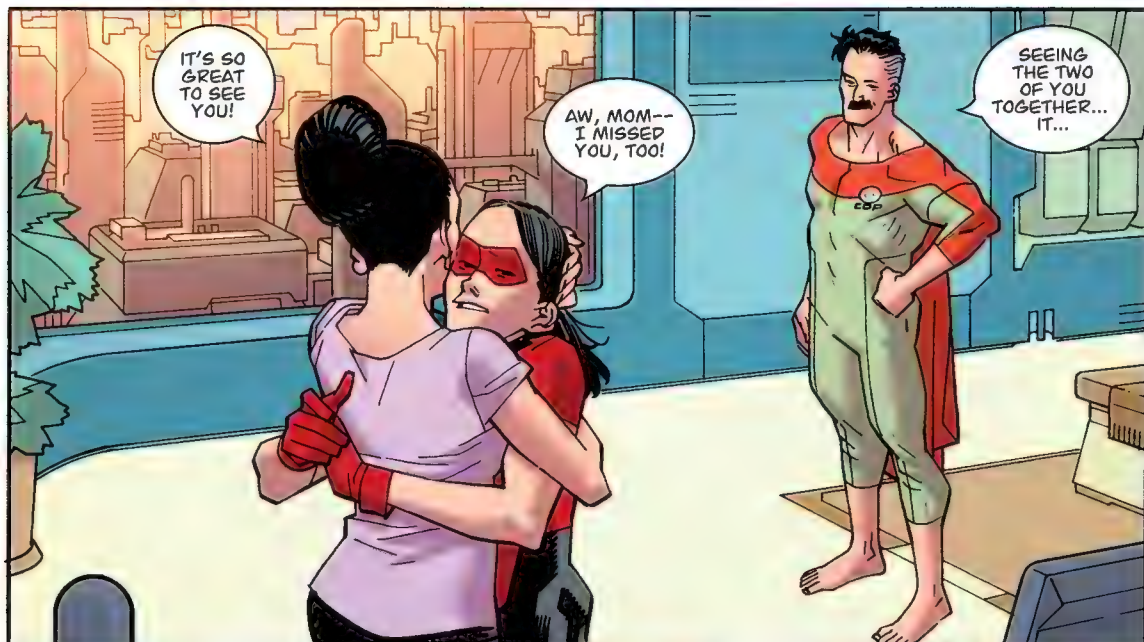
HOURS? WE'LL BE IN OUR QUARTERS IF YOU NEED US.













DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA THE POSITION YOU'VE PUT ME IN?

I KNOW IT SEEMS LIKE A BAD IDEA, BUT HEAR ME OUT--

BAD IDEA? IT'S A HORRIBLE IDEA! WE HAD THE VILTRUMITES ON THE RUN-- THEIR RANKS DEPLETED!

YOU PROPOSE WE LEAVE THEM ALONE--ON EARTH, WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY A BREEDING CAMP!

I SHARE YOUR CONCERN, BUT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT YEARS--DECADES OF LIVING WITH HUMANS IN ORDER TO ADD TO THEIR RANKS.

LOOK WHAT THAT DID FOR ME. I'M CONFIDENT IT COULD TRANSFORM MY PEOPLE... IT COULD BRING THE PEACE WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR.

FORGIVE ME IF I DON'T SHARE YOUR OPTIMISTIC IMPRESSION OF YOUR PEOPLE.



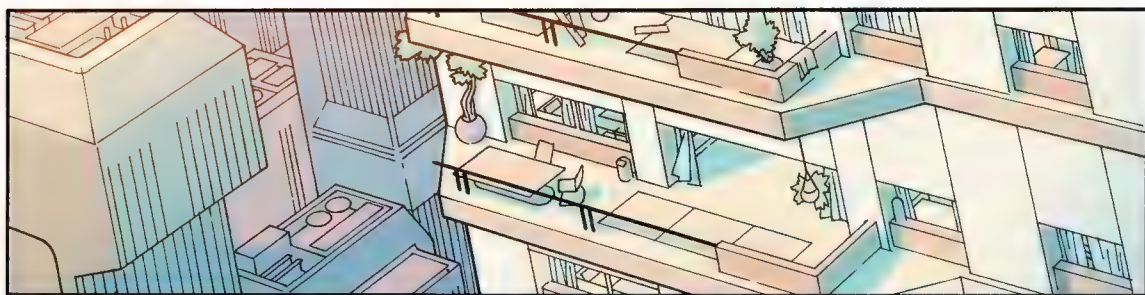
I'VE GOT COUNTLESS PLANETARY SYSTEMS TO REPORT TO, THEY RELY ON ME FOR THEIR PROTECTION.

I DON'T KNOW THAT I CAN JUST...

I'VE GOT A LOT TO CONSIDER. PLEASE...

...LEAVE ME.





IT WAS UNSETTLING TO SEE HIM THAT WAY--LIKE TALKING TO SOMEONE I DIDN'T KNOW.

ALLEN AND I HAVE A BOND... THIS SITUATION ON EARTH... IT HAS ME CONCERNED.

AS IT SHOULD. JUST BECAUSE THEY SAY THEY'RE NOT GOING TO CAUSE ANY TROUBLE, DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD BELIEVE THEM.

YOUR PEOPLE ARE VERY GOOD LIARS.

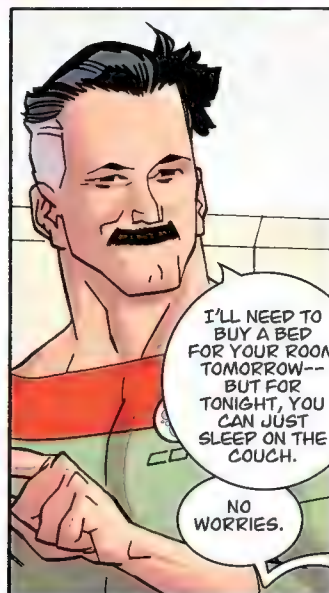


OKAY, I DESERVE THAT.



THIS PLACE IS TOTALLY GREAT. I WISH ALLEN HAD JUST LET ME STAY HERE WHILE YOU WERE GONE.

AND I'M GLAD HE KEPT YOU OUT OF TROUBLE.



I'LL NEED TO BUY A BED FOR YOUR ROOM TOMORROW-- BUT FOR TONIGHT, YOU CAN JUST SLEEP ON THE COUCH.

NO WORRIES.

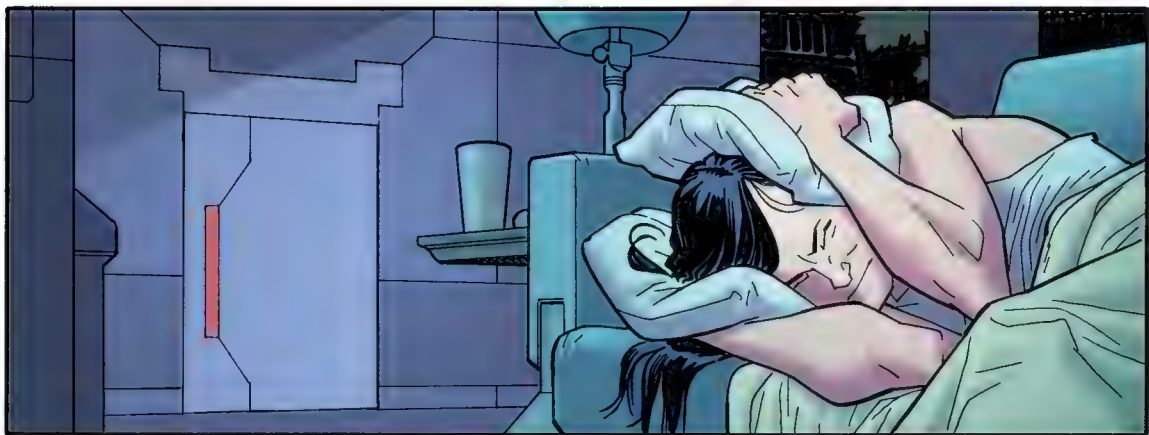
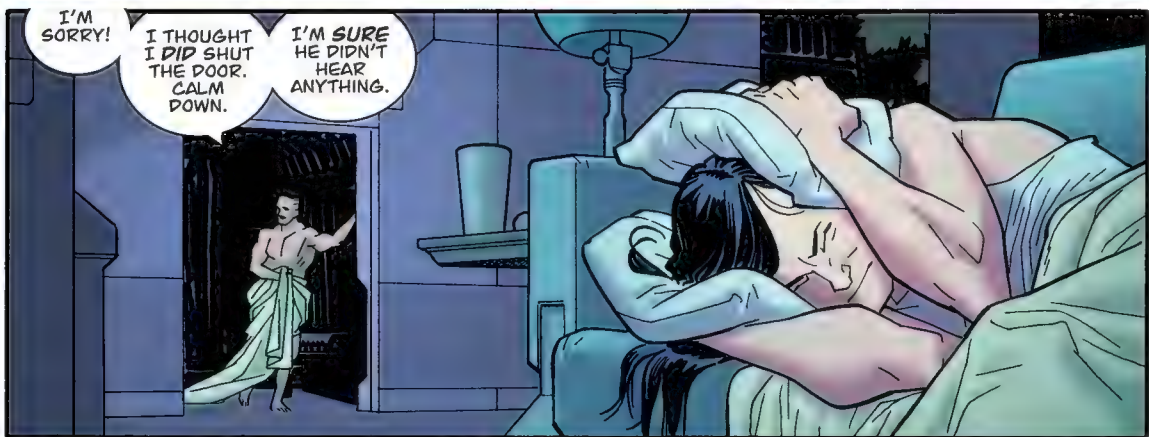
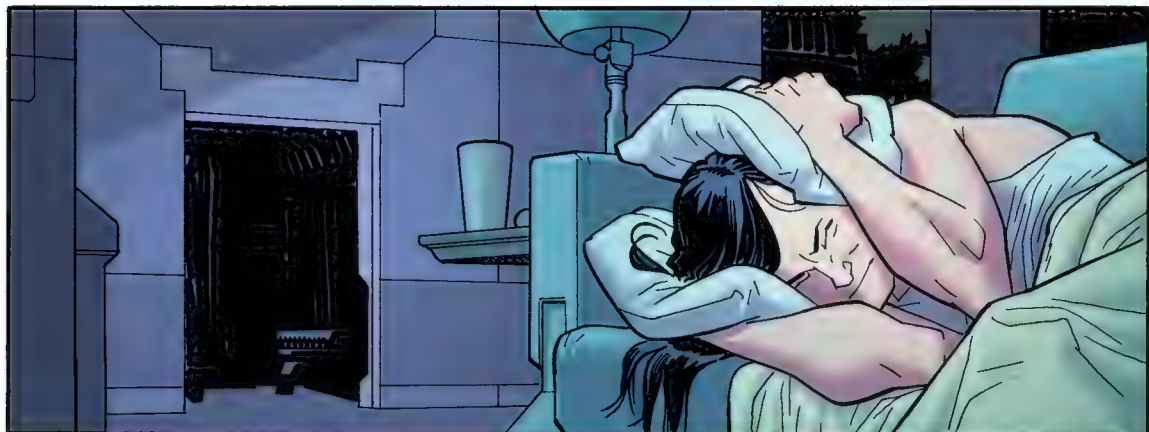
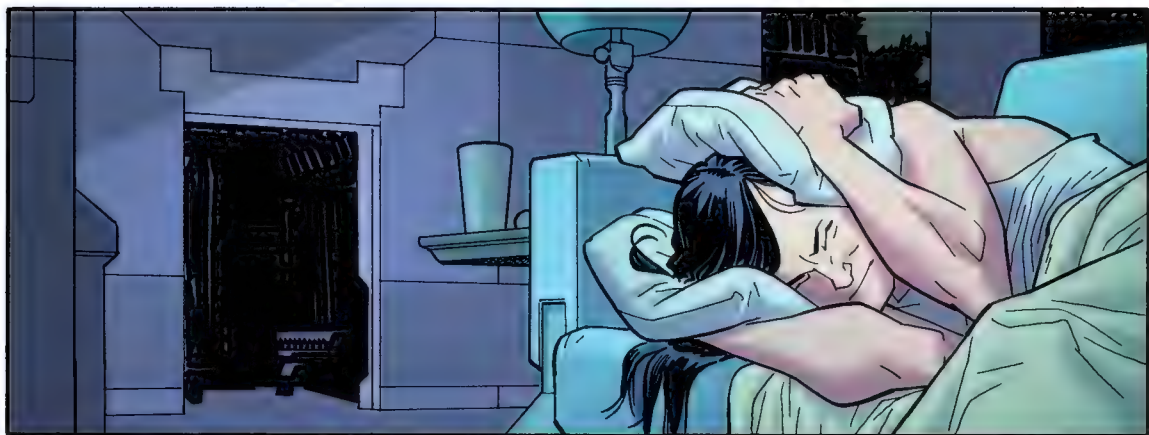


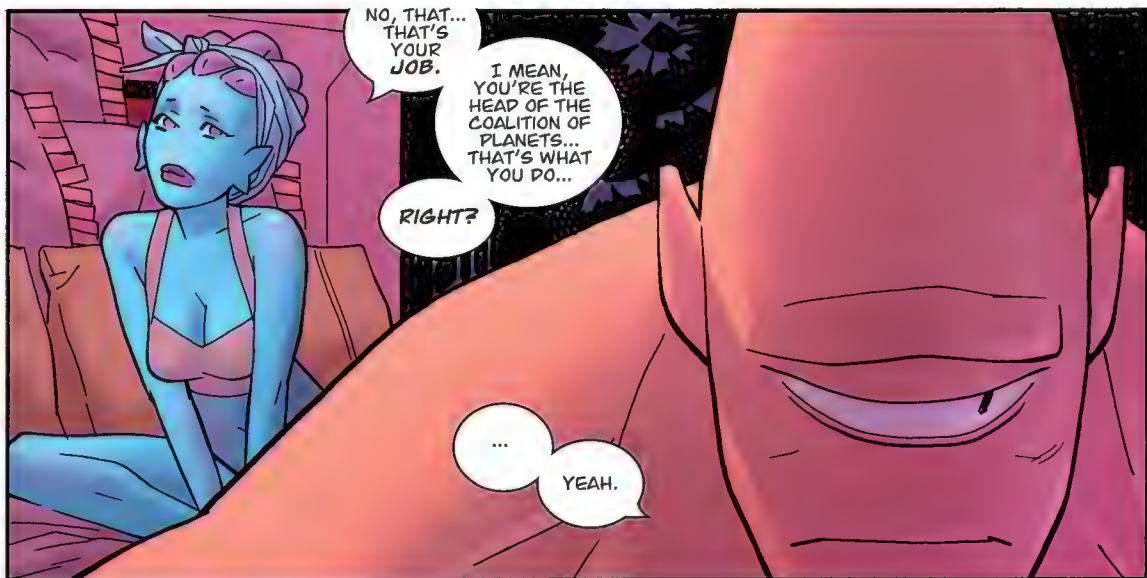
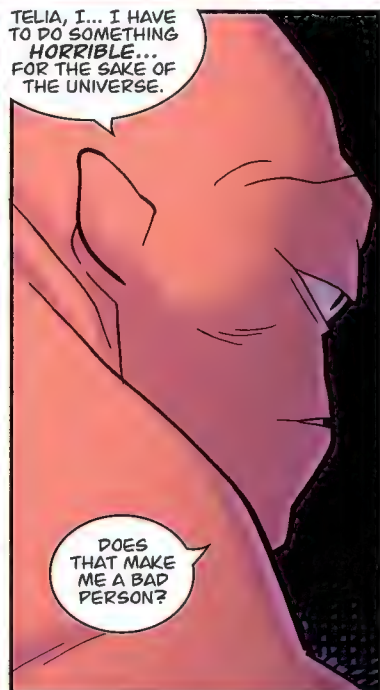
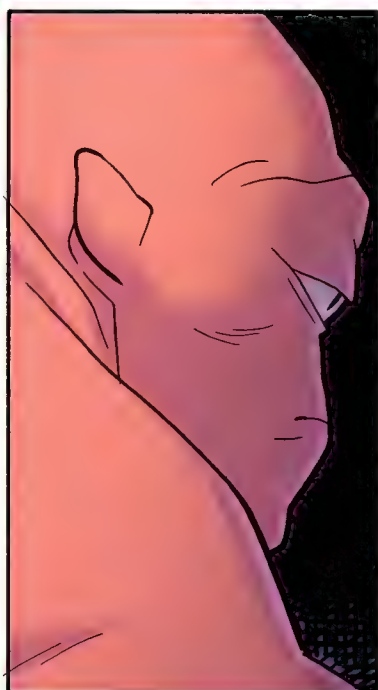
ANYTHING WILL BE BETTER THAN STAYING WITH ALLEN AND TELIA. I HEARD EVERYTHING AT THAT PLACE...

AND I MEAN... UGH... EVERYTHING.



WELL, YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT HERE...







SLEEP WELL?

YEAH.

ALLEN AND TELIA TAKE CARE OF YOU WHILE I WAS AWAY?

OOH, SORE SUBJECT. YOU'RE NO LONGER A CHILD. DULY NOTED.

DO YOU LIKE IT HERE?

SO, ARE WE GOING TO STAY HERE?

ON MY MOTHER'S PLANET--I'D BE AN ELDER, HELL--I'D BE **MONARCH** BY NOW. THEY "TOOK CARE OF ME" AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD NEED TO "TAKE CARE" OF AN ADULT.

I KIND OF DO. IT'S... BETTER THAN EARTH IN A LOT OF WAYS. PEOPLE SEEM MORE AWARE OF THE UNIVERSE AS A WHOLE. THE PEOPLE SEEM MUCH MORE ENLIGHTENED... I... NEVER CARED FOR EARTH ALL THAT MUCH.

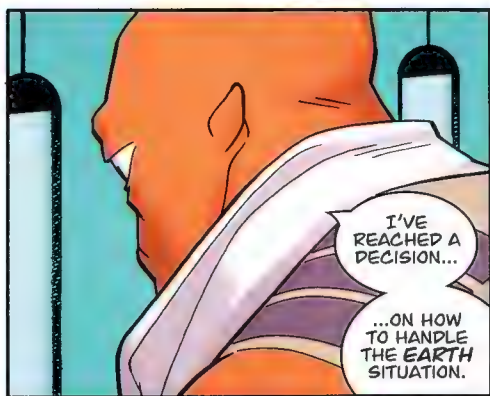
OH? I DON'T KNOW THAT YOU SPENT ENOUGH TIME THERE, THEN. THERE'S A LOT TO LIKE.

WHEN WAS THE LAST WAR THAT TOOK PLACE ON THIS PLANET-- THAT ONLY INVOLVED PEOPLE ON THIS PLANET? THE FACT THAT THE PEOPLE ON EARTH STILL FIGHT EACH OTHER... IT'S JUST... STUPID.

I'D WAGER YOU AND MARK CARE FOR EARTH FAR MORE THAN MOST PEOPLE ON EARTH CARE FOR EACH OTHER.

DO YOU THINK THAT'S A BAD THING?

I DON'T KNOW...





BEFORE HE DIED...
THAEPUS TOLD
YOU ABOUT
THE SCOURGE
VIRUS...
DIDN'T HE?



DON'T.
IT'S NO LONGER
THERE.



WHERE
IS IT?



I'M SORRY, THIS
IS GOING TO GET
UGLY, BUT I JUST
COULDN'T DO THIS
WITHOUT TELLING
YOU FIRST.

I VALUE
OUR
FRIENDSHIP
TOO MUCH.

IT'S BEING
LOADED ON A
SHIP, THAT I AM
PERSONALLY
GOING TO TRAVEL
TO EARTH IN... WHERE I
WILL THEN INTRODUCE
THE VIRUS INTO
THE PLANET'S
ATMOSPHERE.

I'M
SORRY.



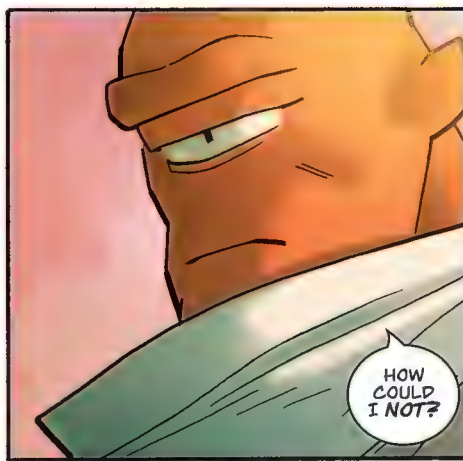
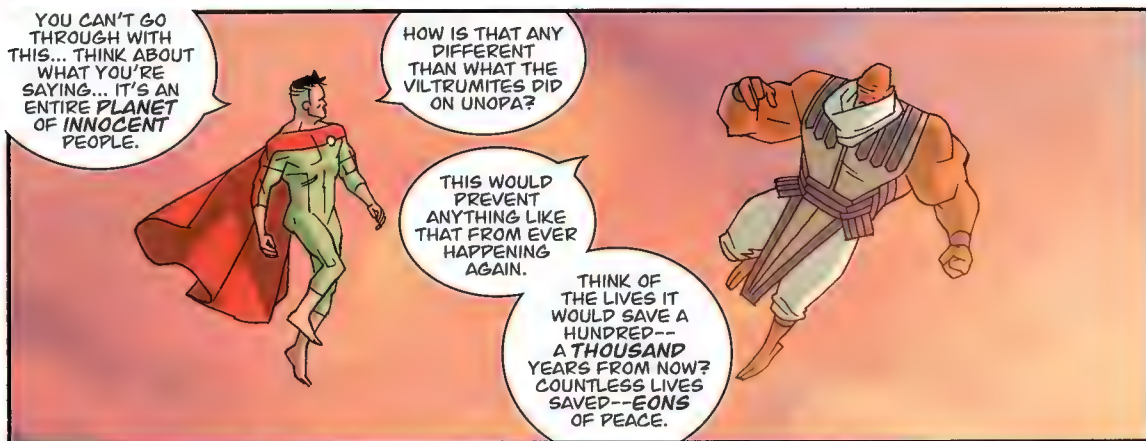


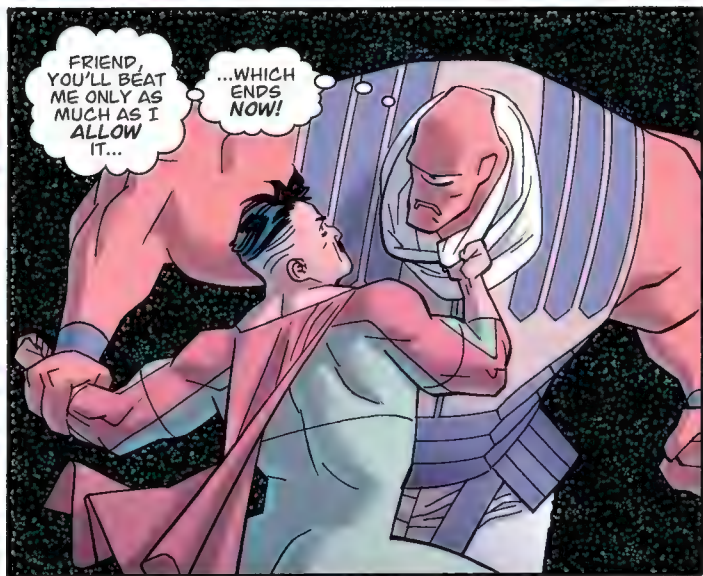
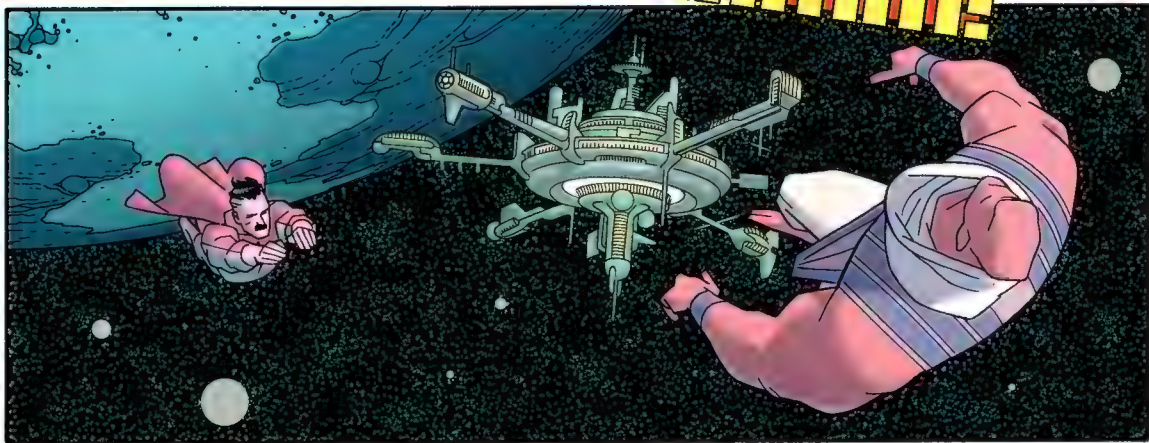
CHAPTER 86













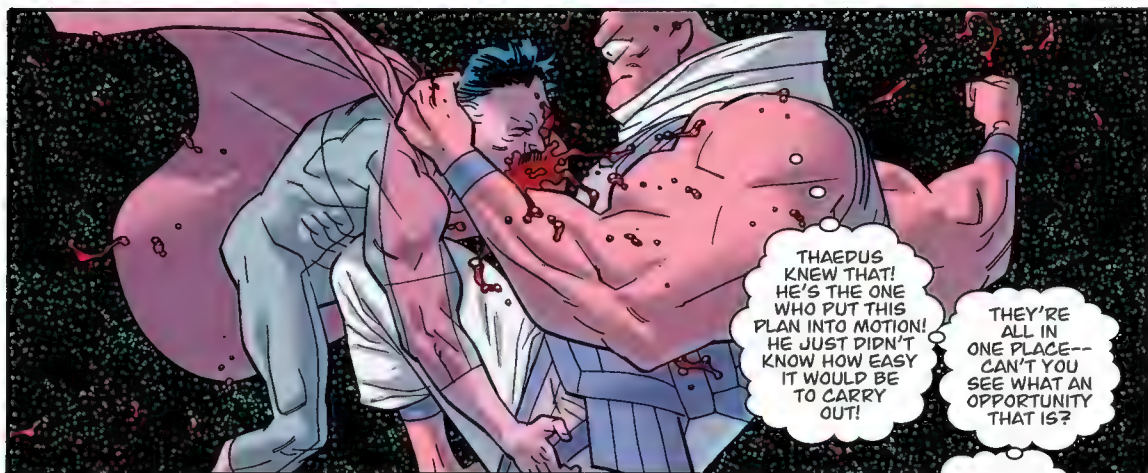
I KNEW
YOU'D MAKE
ME DO THIS! I
KNEW YOU'D
STAND
AGAINST
ME!

YOU CAN'T
SEE THINGS
THE WAY I DO.
YOUR TIME WITH
THE VILTRUMITE
EMPIRE HAS
SCARRED
YOU!



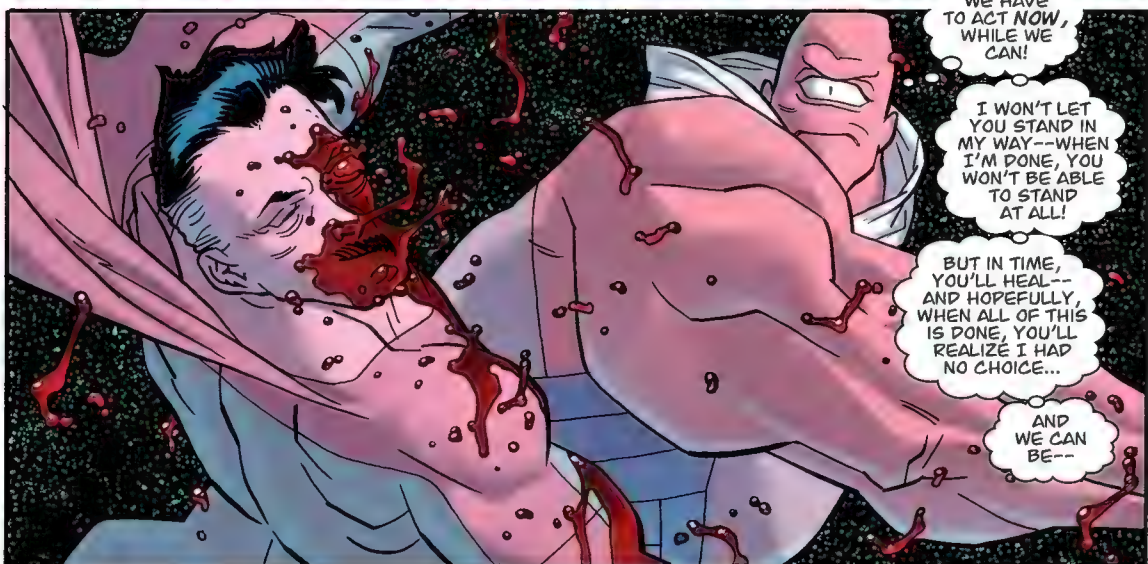
YOU FEEL
LIKE IF YOU TAKE
ONE STEP BACK
TOWARD THAT
LIFE--YOU WON'T
COME BACK!

BUT I LEAD
THE COALITION
NOW! I HAVE TO
PROTECT MILLIONS
OF LIVES! SOMETIMES
THESE KINDS OF
DECISIONS HAVE
TO BE MADE!



THAEPUS
KNEW THAT!
HE'S THE ONE
WHO PUT THIS
PLAN INTO MOTION!
HE JUST DIDN'T
KNOW HOW EASY
IT WOULD BE
TO CARRY
OUT!

THEY'RE
ALL IN
ONE PLACE--
CAN'T YOU
SEE WHAT AN
OPPORTUNITY
THAT IS?

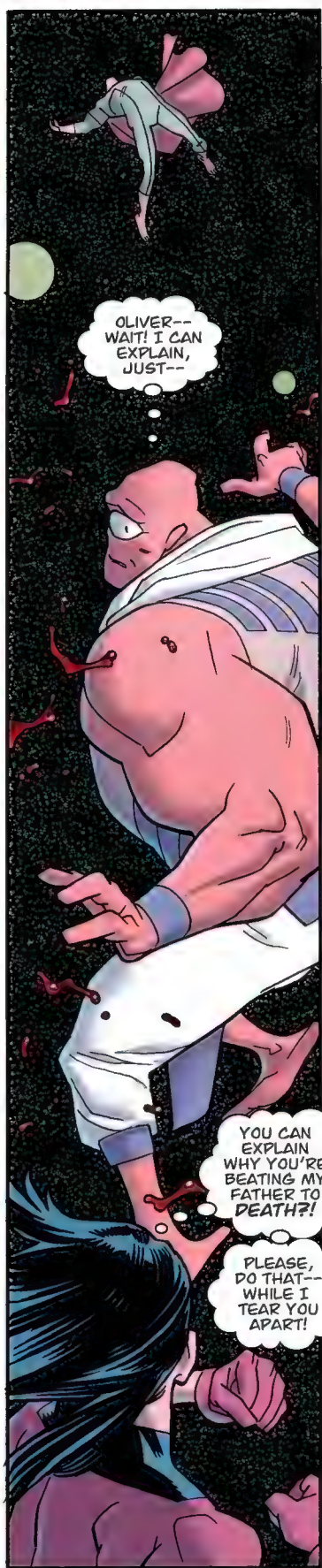


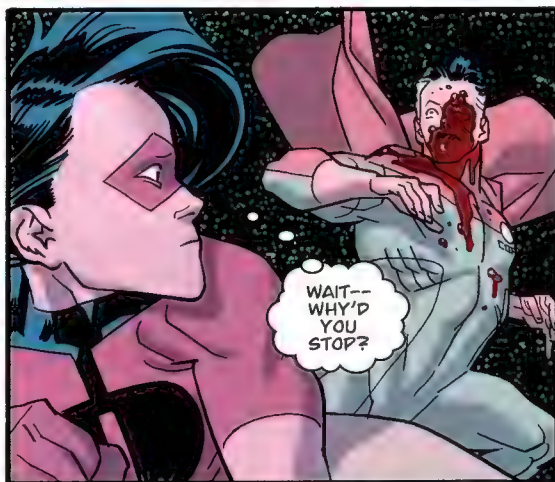
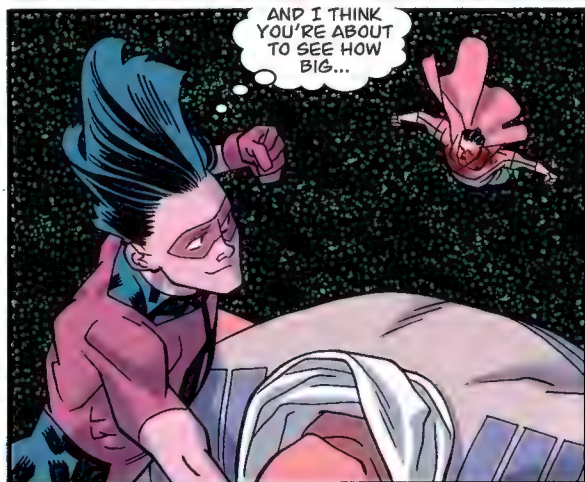
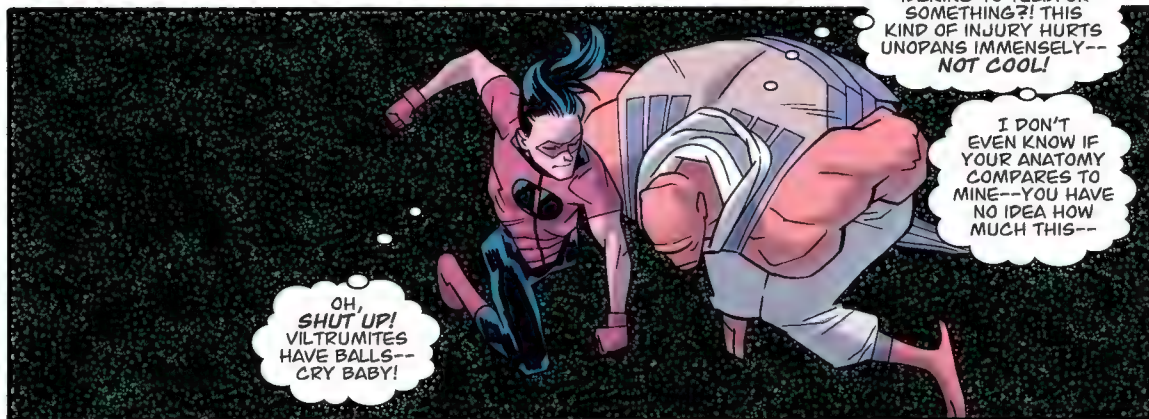
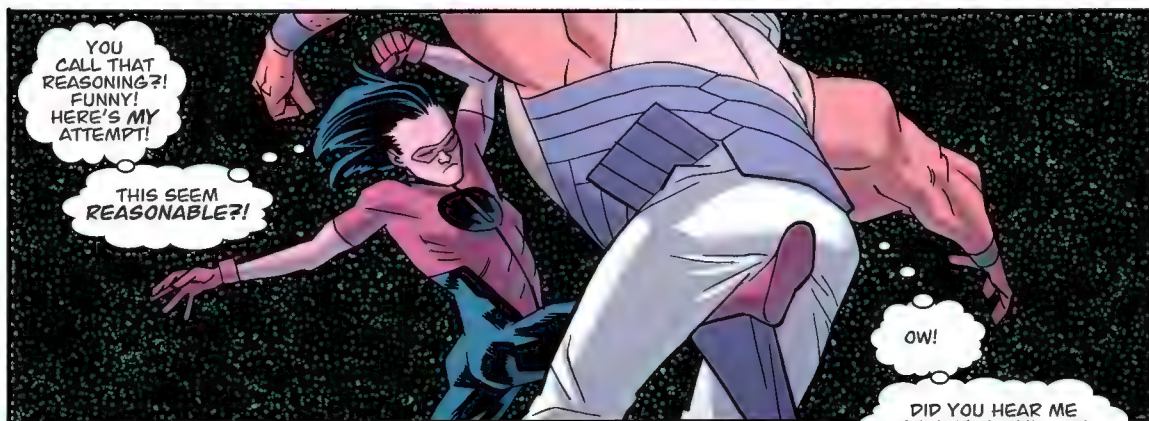
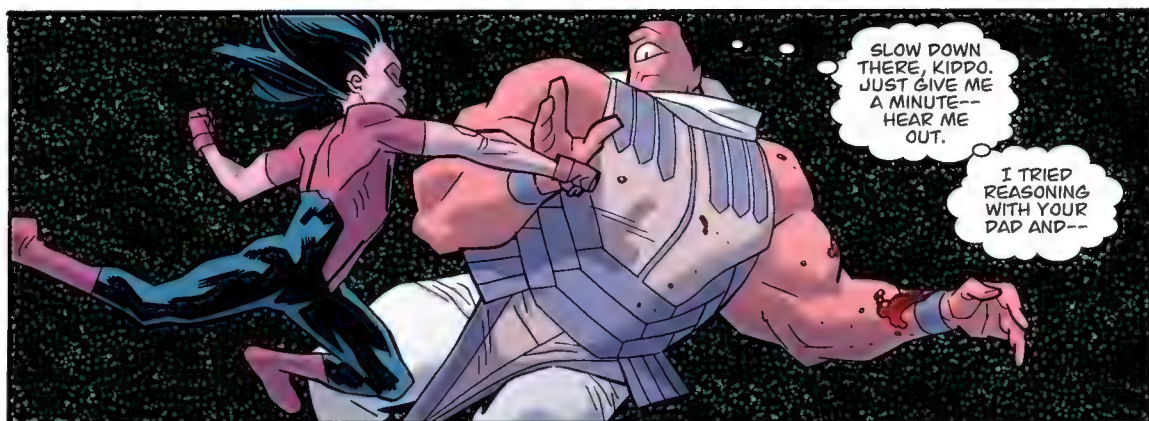
WE HAVE
TO ACT NOW,
WHILE WE
CAN!

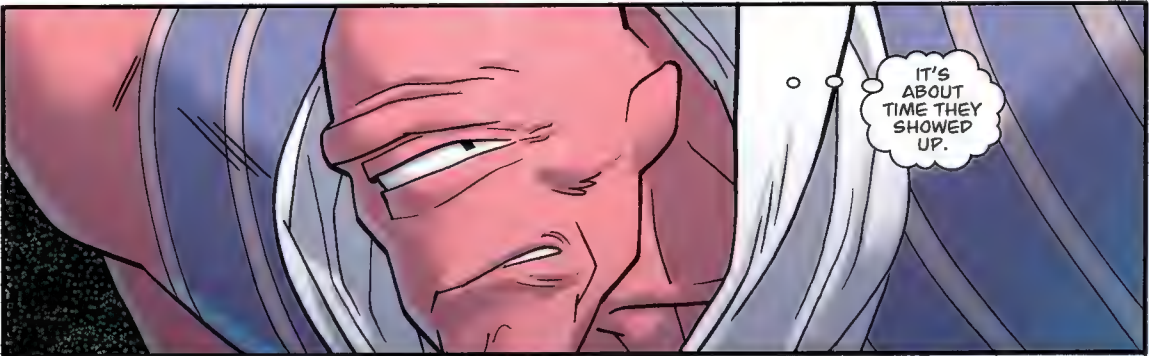
I WON'T LET
YOU STAND IN
MY WAY--WHEN
I'M DONE, YOU
WON'T BE ABLE
TO STAND
AT ALL!

BUT IN TIME,
YOU'LL HEAL--
AND HOPEFULLY,
WHEN ALL OF THIS
IS DONE, YOU'LL
REALIZE I HAD
NO CHOICE...

AND
WE CAN
BE--

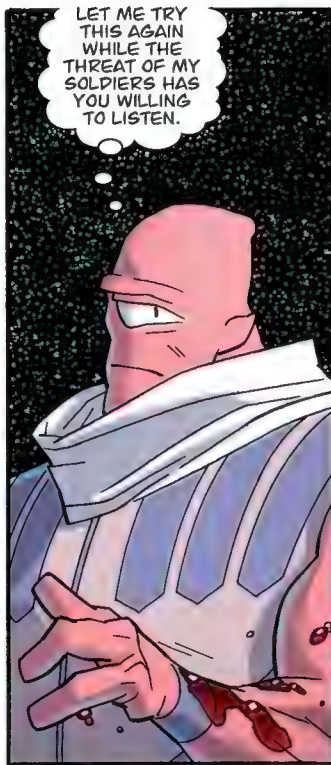








OKAY...



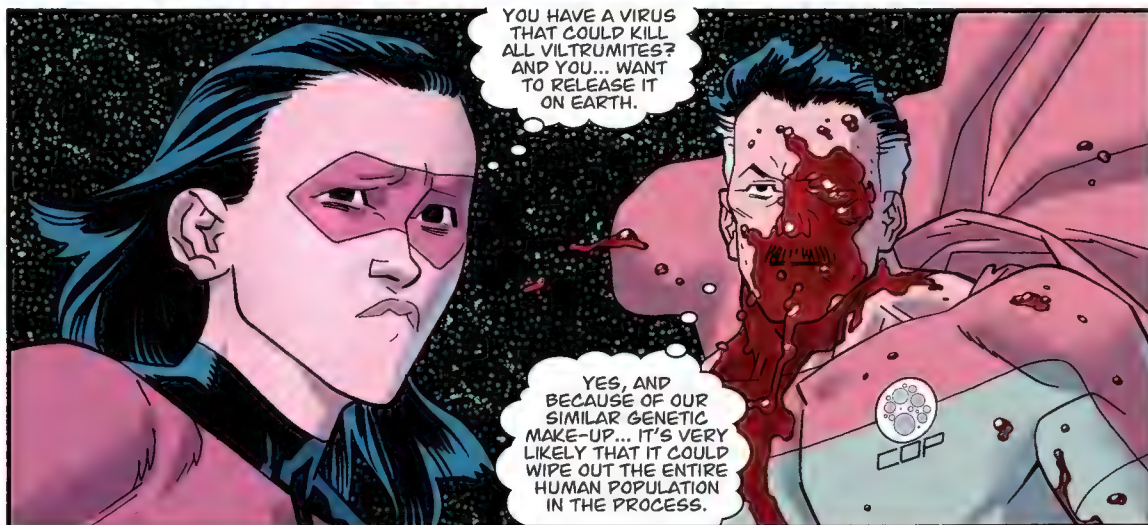
LET ME TRY
THIS AGAIN
WHILE THE
THREAT OF MY
SOLDIERS HAS
YOU WILLING TO
LISTEN.



IF I RELEASE THE SCOURGE
VIRUS ON EARTH--IT'S NOT
ONE-HUNDRED PERCENT
CERTAIN THAT IT WILL
AFFECT THE HUMAN
POPULATION THERE. IT'S
POSSIBLE... BUT
THAT'S IT.

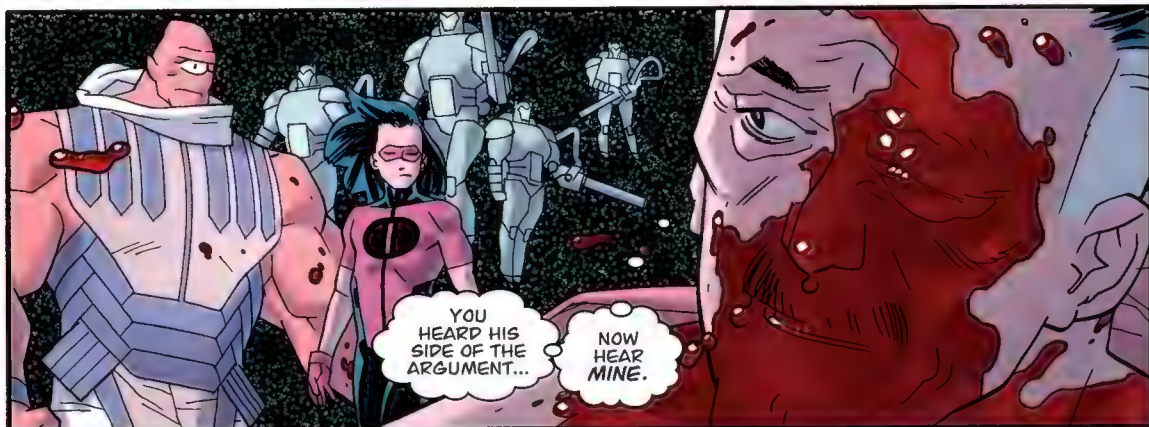
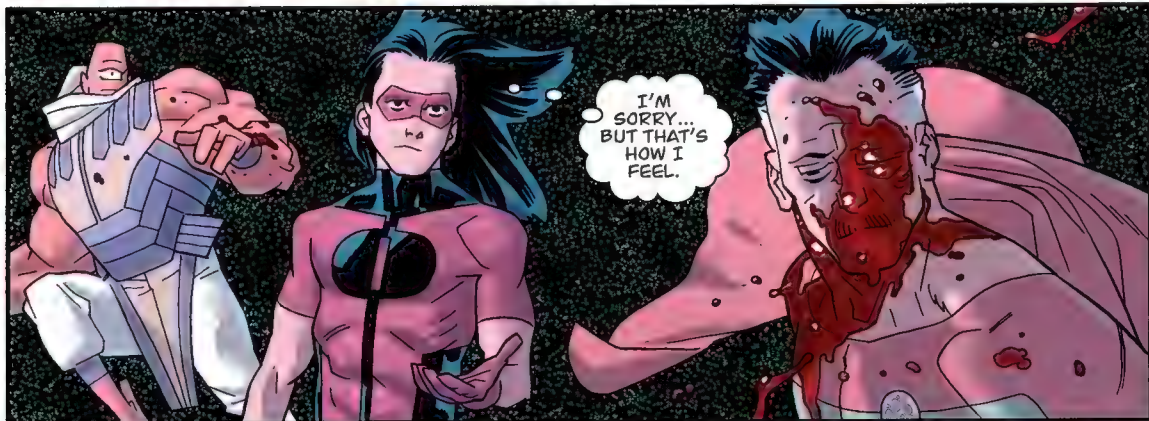
I'M SORRY,
BUT--THAT'S A
RISK WORTH
TAKING. IF THAT
VIRUS CAN WIPE OUT
THE VILTRUMITES
ONCE AND FOR ALL--
RID THE UNIVERSE
OF THAT THREAT...
I HAVE TO
DO IT.

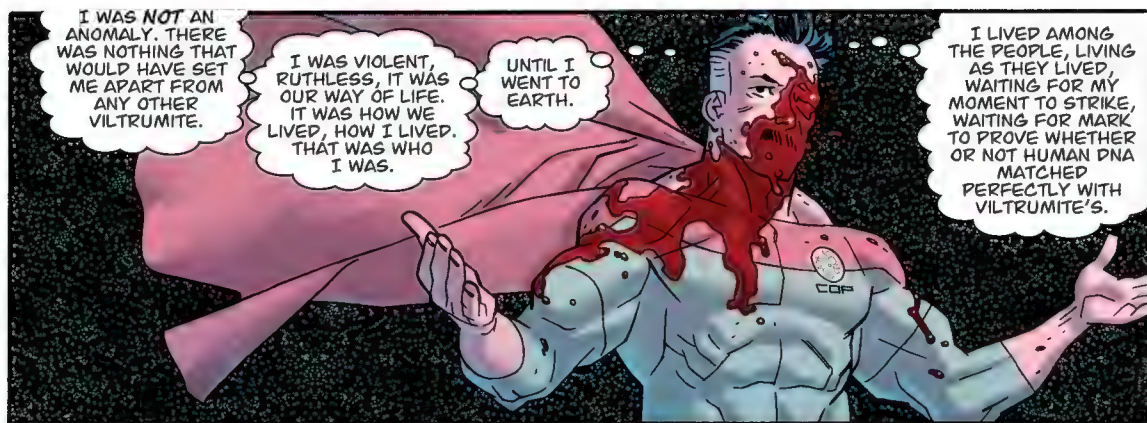
IF YOU THINK
ABOUT THIS...
REALLY CONSIDER
WHAT IS AT STAKE
HERE, YOU'LL
SEE THAT I'M
RIGHT.



YOU HAVE A VIRUS
THAT COULD KILL
ALL VILTRUMITES?
AND YOU... WANT
TO RELEASE IT
ON EARTH.

YES, AND
BECAUSE OF OUR
SIMILAR GENETIC
MAKE-UP... IT'S VERY
LIKELY THAT IT COULD
WIPE OUT THE ENTIRE
HUMAN POPULATION
IN THE PROCESS.





I WAS NOT AN ANOMALY. THERE WAS NOTHING THAT WOULD HAVE SET ME APART FROM ANY OTHER VILTRUMITE.

I WAS VIOLENT, RUTHLESS, IT WAS OUR WAY OF LIFE. IT WAS HOW WE LIVED, HOW I LIVED. THAT WAS WHO I WAS.

UNTIL I WENT TO EARTH.

I LIVED AMONG THE PEOPLE, LIVING AS THEY LIVED, WAITING FOR MY MOMENT TO STRIKE, WAITING FOR MARK TO PROVE WHETHER OR NOT HUMAN DNA MATCHED PERFECTLY WITH VILTRUMITE'S.

THAT TIME CHANGED ME. I HARDLY EVEN REALIZED IT AT THE TIME. THE AFFECTION SHOWN FOR THOSE AROUND THEM, THOSE THEY... LOVE. I PRETENDED... UNTIL I WASN'T PRETENDING ANYMORE.

WHEN THE TIME CAME TO COMPLETE MY MISSION, I COULDN'T DO IT... I WAS DIFFERENT. EARTH HAD CHANGED ME.

NOW WHAT REMAINS OF MY PEOPLE ARE EXISTING ON EARTH, AS I DID, AND FOR A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME.

I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENED TO ME... WILL HAPPEN TO ALL OF THEM.



AND WHAT IF THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN? WE WILL HAVE SQUANDERED OUR ONLY CHANCE TO RID OURSELVES OF THIS THREAT TO OUR ENTIRE UNIVERSE.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT YOUR PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE OF? OUR EFFORTS TO DESTROY THEM IN THE RECENT WAR?

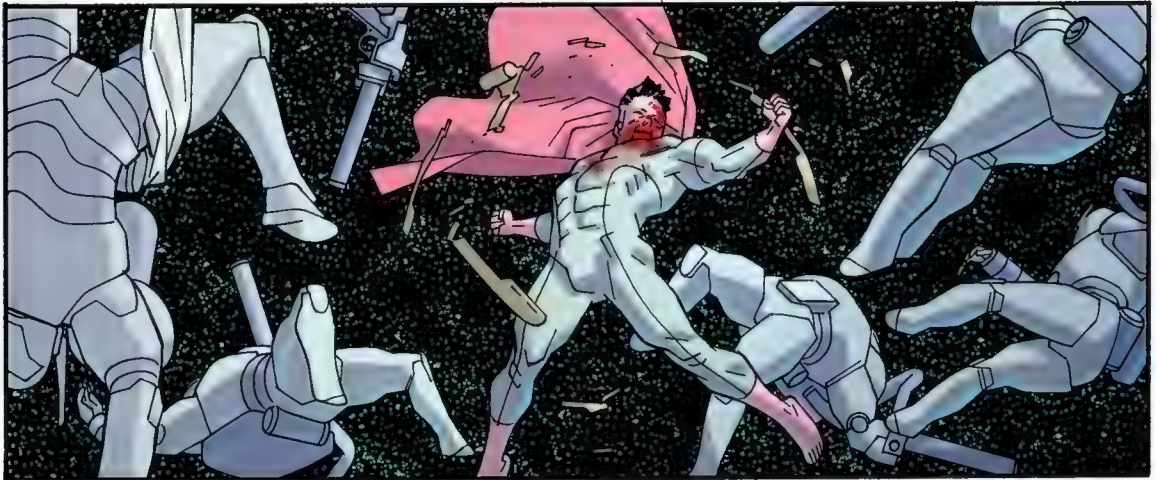
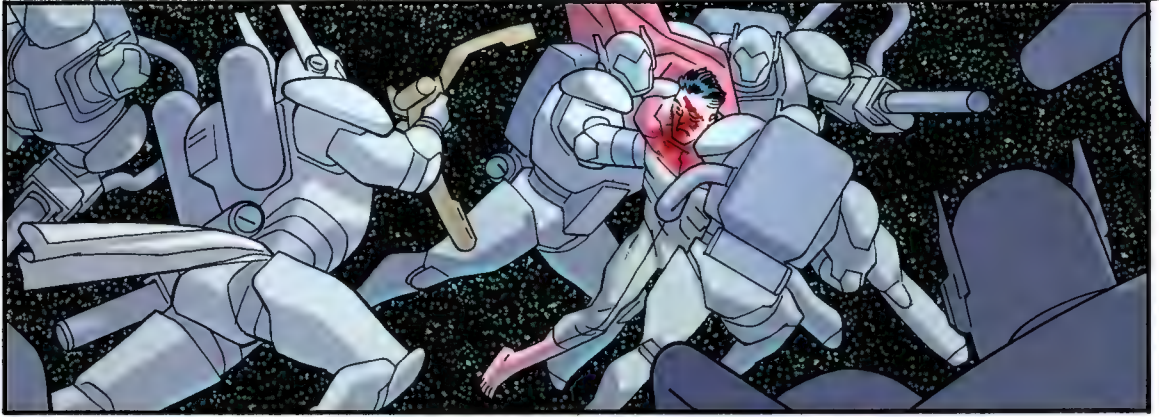
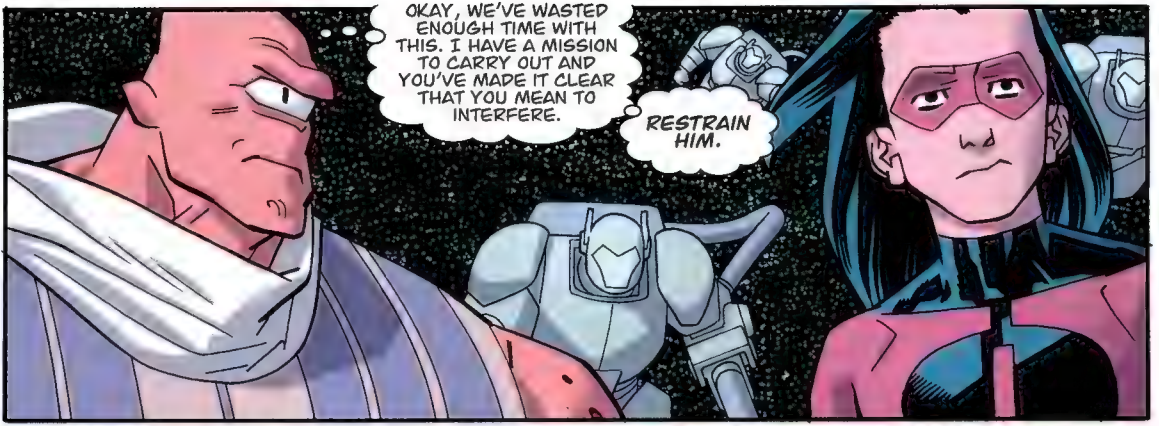
I'M CONFUSED, MY FRIEND. ARE YOU TRYING TO SAVE THE INNOCENT PEOPLE OF EARTH... OR YOUR VILTRUMITE BRETHREN?

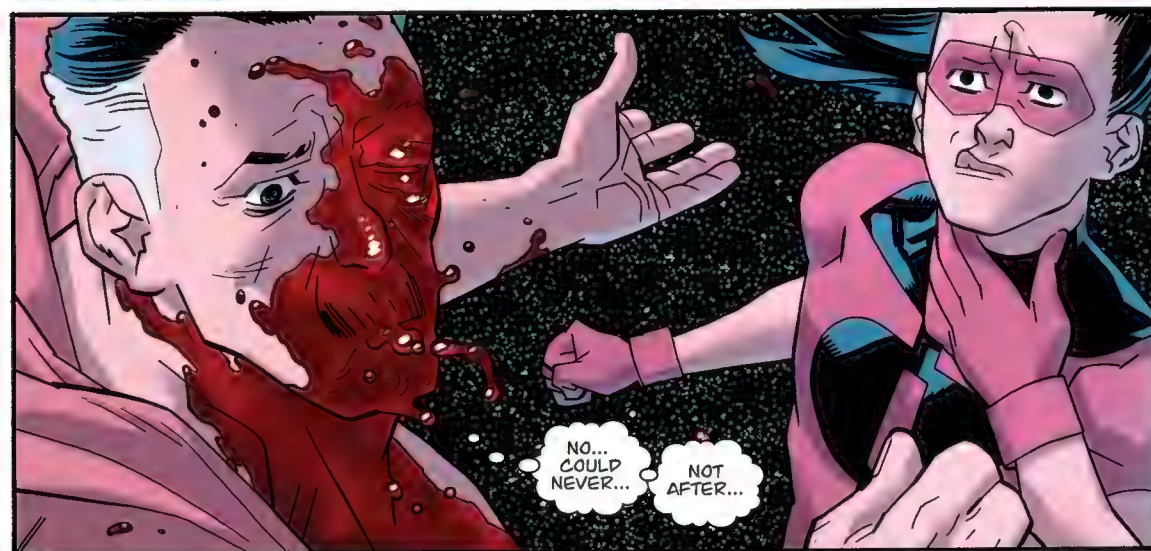
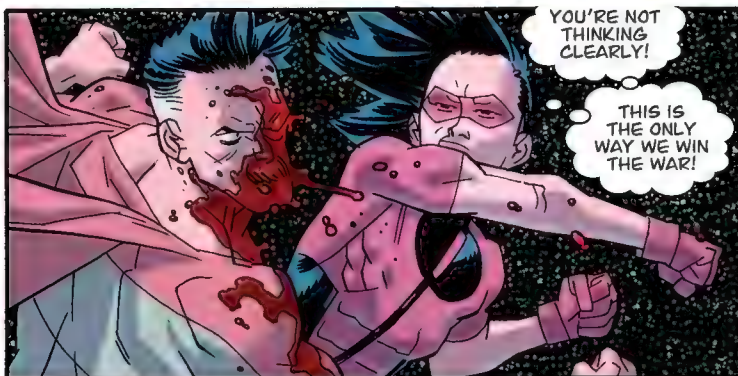
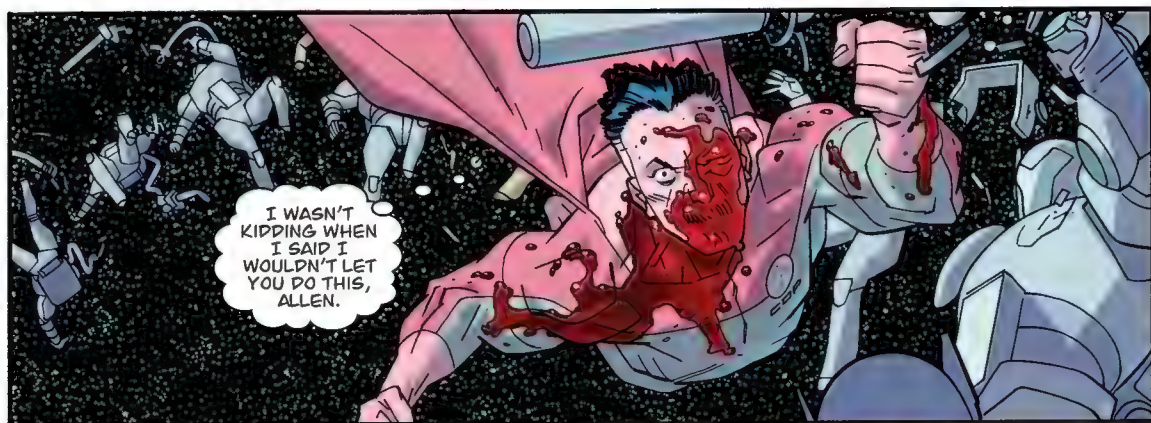


WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF EARTH IS TRUE OF MY MOTHER, AND VERY FEW OTHERS. I HAVE READ THE ENTIRETY OF THEIR WRITTEN HISTORY... MY OPINION OF THEM DIFFERS FROM YOURS... SUBSTANTIALLY.

THEY'RE ASSHOLES. THEY CARE ONLY FOR TAKING WHAT THEY DON'T HAVE FROM THOSE THAT DO. THEY'RE A SMALL AND PETTY PEOPLE WHO ARE NEARLY AS ADDICTED TO VIOLENCE AS OUR RACE IS.

YOU BELIEVE VILTRUMITES WILL LEARN FROM THEM, AND BE MADE BETTER BY IT. I'M SORRY, FATHER... BUT... YOU'RE WRONG.

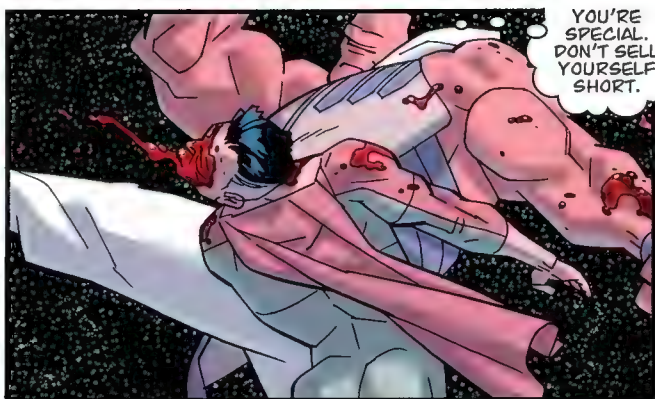




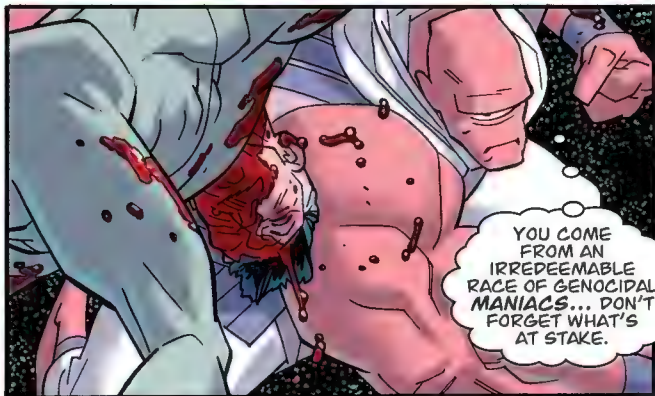


WELL, THAT WAS TOUCHING... YOU HAVE CHANGED.

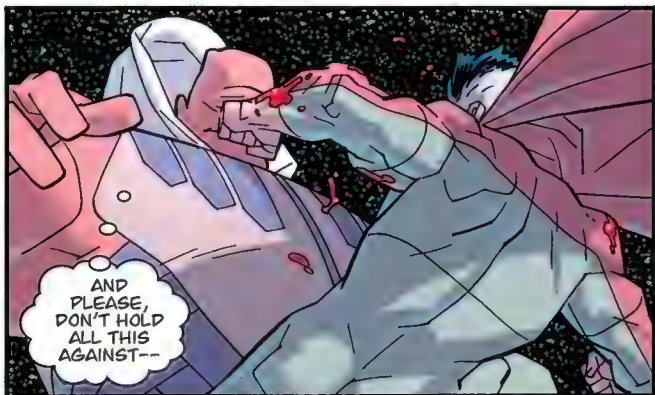
STILL, THOUGH... I'M CONVINCED YOU'RE AN ANOMALY. I JUST CAN'T SEE GRAND REGENT THRAGG MARRYING A NICE LITTLE HUMAN WOMAN AND SETTLING DOWN.



YOU'RE SPECIAL. DON'T SELL YOURSELF SHORT.



YOU COME FROM AN IRREPEEMABLE RACE OF GENOCIDAL MANIACS... DON'T FORGET WHAT'S AT STAKE.

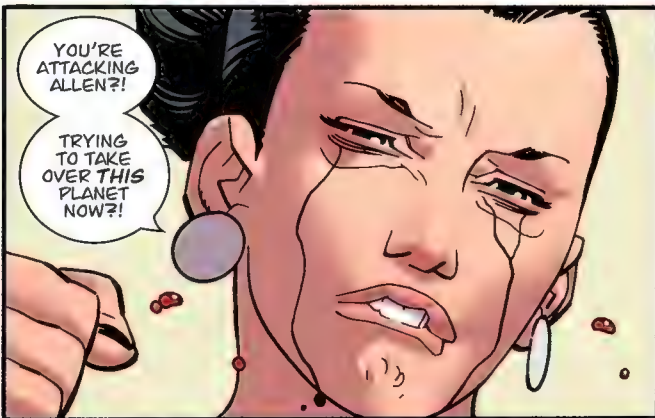
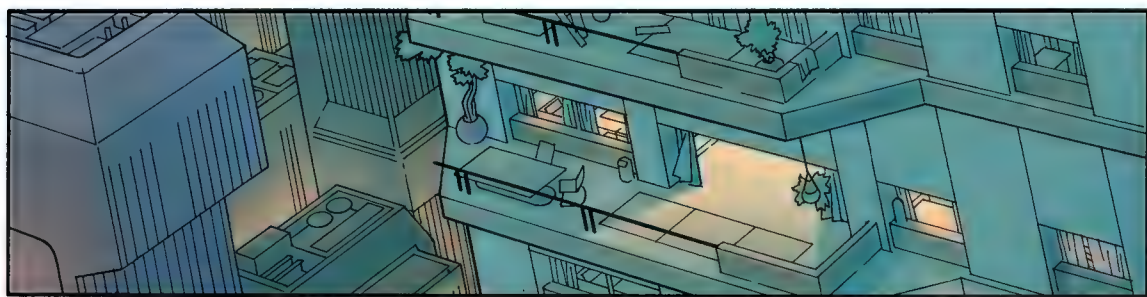


AND PLEASE, DON'T HOLD ALL THIS AGAINST--



DAMN.









WE'VE
GOT TO
GET TO
EARTH...

WE'VE
GOT TO...

WE...





CHAPTER 87





MY FIRST
ATTEMPT TO RULE
THIS DIMENSION
WAS A HALF-HEARTED
ATTEMPT, **DOOMED**
TO FAIL FROM
THE VERY
START.*


MY WORLD
WAS DYING, ITS
ENERGY DEPLETED,
I WAS DESPERATE
AND HUNGRY--I
ENTERED YOUR
WORLD IN MY
DEPLETED FORM,
TRYING IN VAIN
TO OVERTAKE
YOU.

I UNDERESTIMATED
THE RESISTANCE THIS
WORLD WOULD HAVE
TO OFFER... BUT NOT
THIS TIME.

THIS TIME
I ENTERED YOUR
WORLD UNDETECTED,
SPENT **MONTHS**
RESTORING MYSELF,
DRAINING YOUR WORLD
OF ENERGY WITHOUT
DETECTION--WAITING
FOR THE PERFECT
MOMENT TO
STRIKE...

*SEE INVINCIBLE 27.

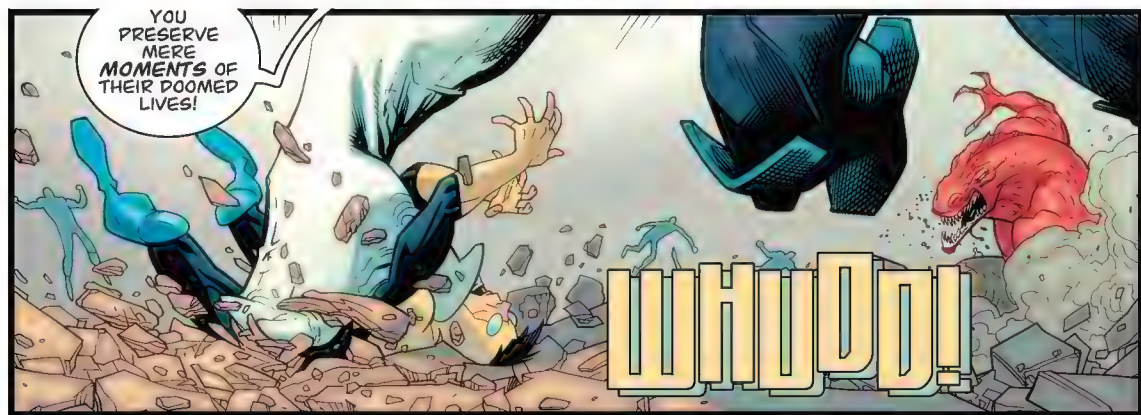
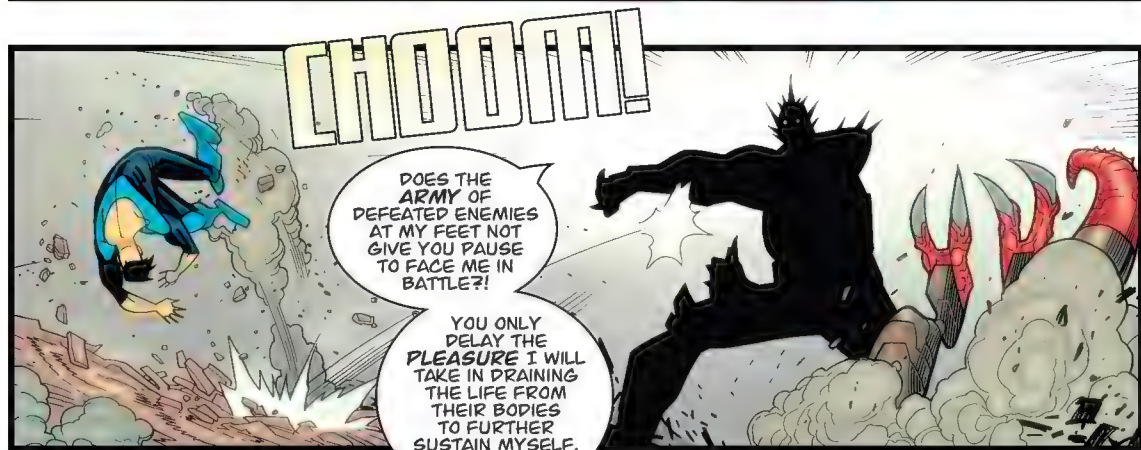




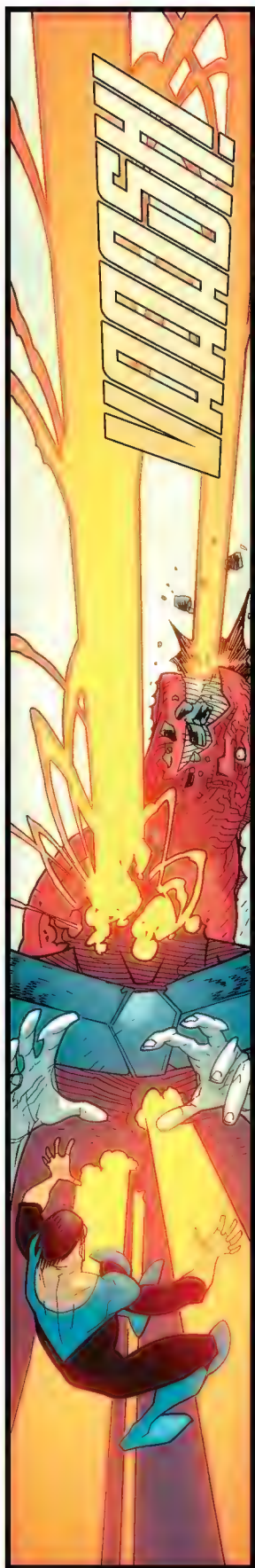
HOW LONG
DID YOU WAIT
TO TELL ME ABOUT
THIS?! THESE ARE
MY **FRIENDS!** THEY
COULD HAVE BEEN
KILLED!! SOME OF
THEM MIGHT
ALREADY BE
DEAD!

THOSE
IRRIGATION
CHANNELS YOU
WERE DIGGING
WERE FAR MORE
IMPORTANT IN
THE GRAND
SCHEME OF
THINGS.

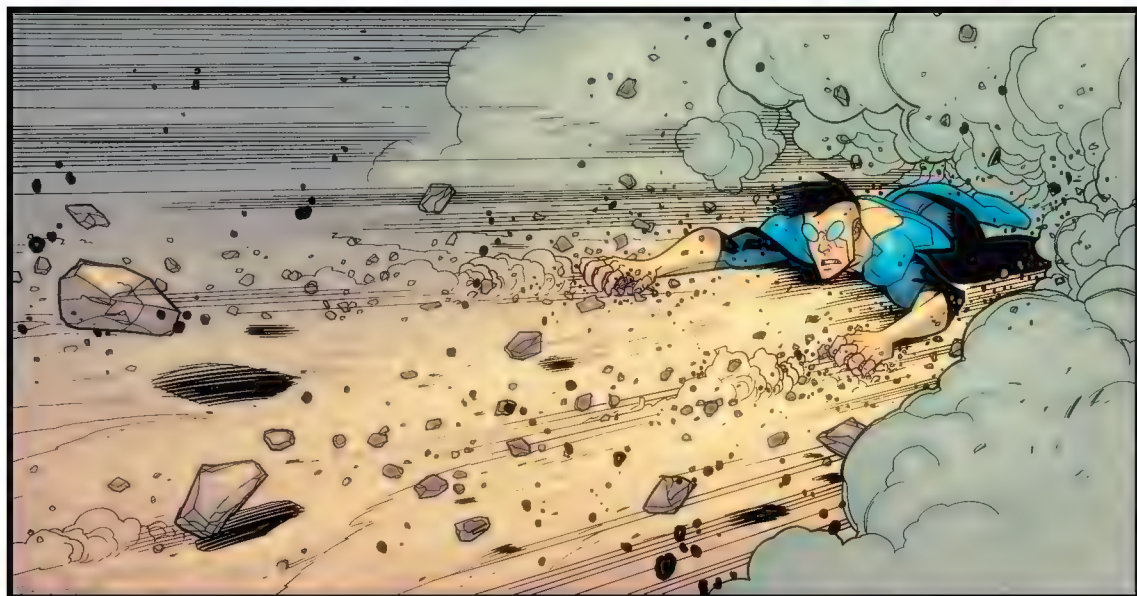
I ONLY
ALERTED YOU
WHEN IT
WAS CLEAR
WE'D BE
NEEDED.



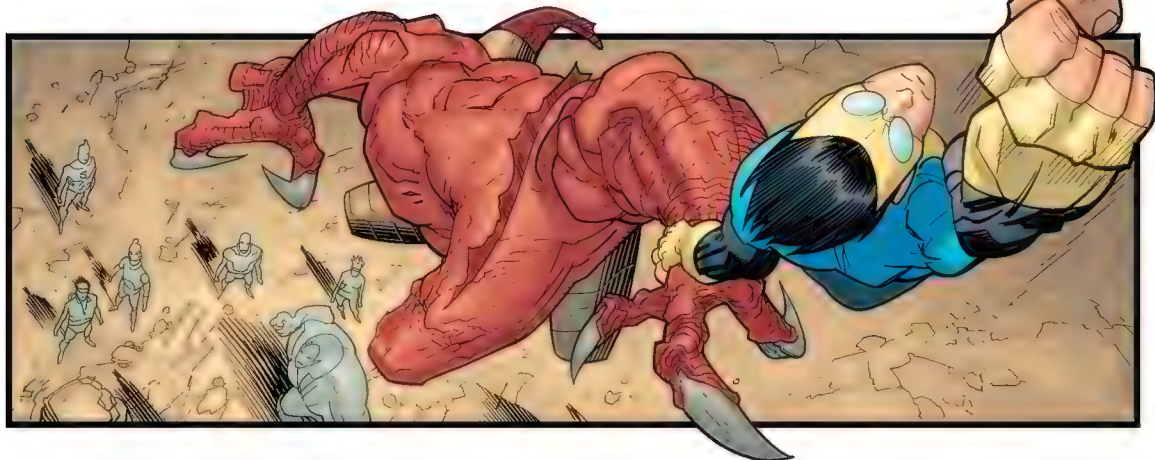
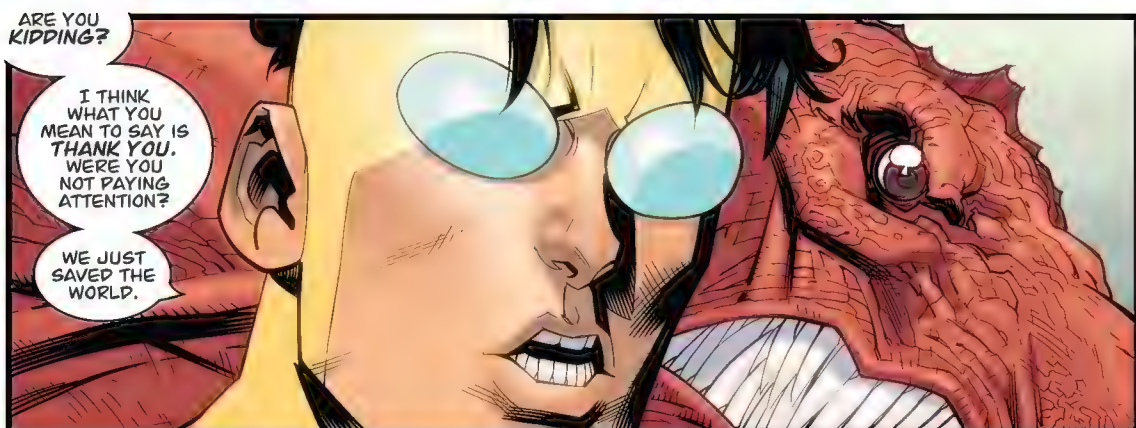
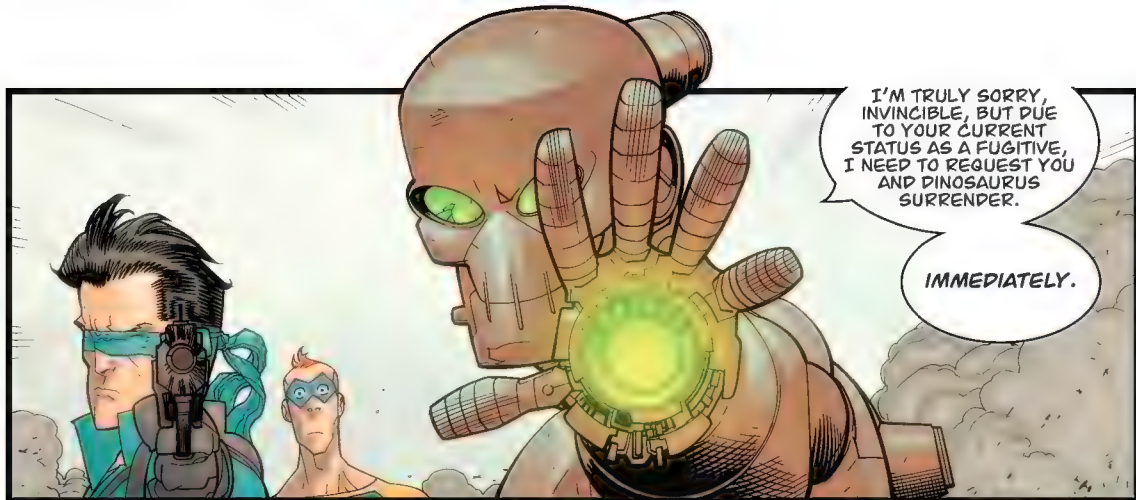
УОМПИ!

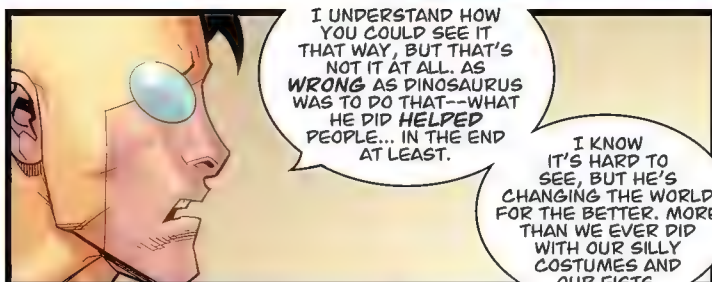
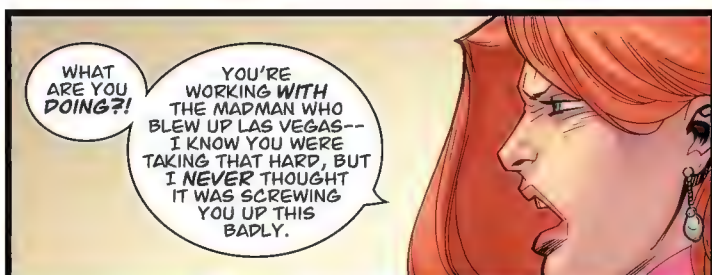


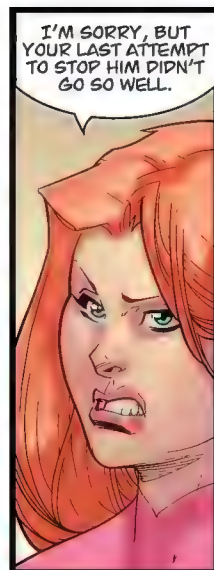
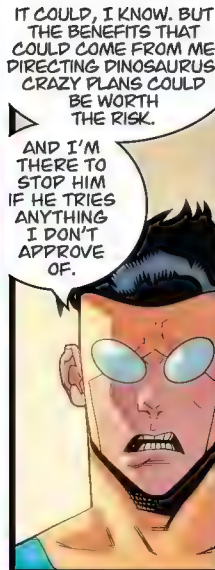
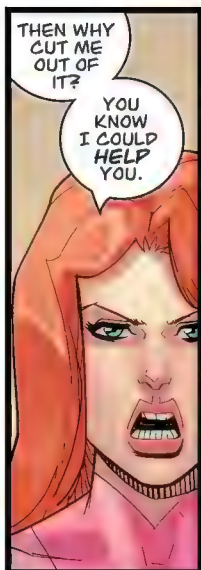
УОМПИ!

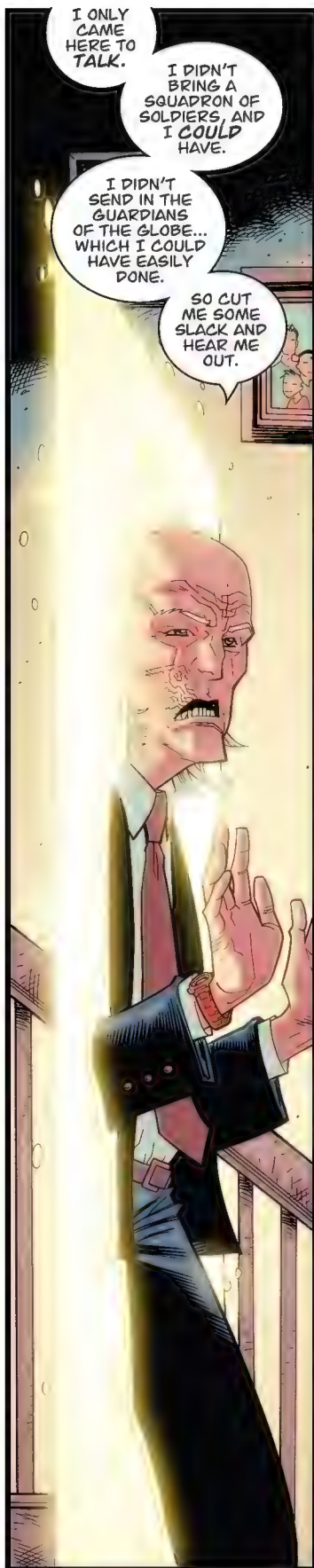












I ONLY
CAME
HERE TO
TALK.

I DIDN'T
BRING A
SQUADRON OF
SOLDIERS, AND
I *COULD*
HAVE.

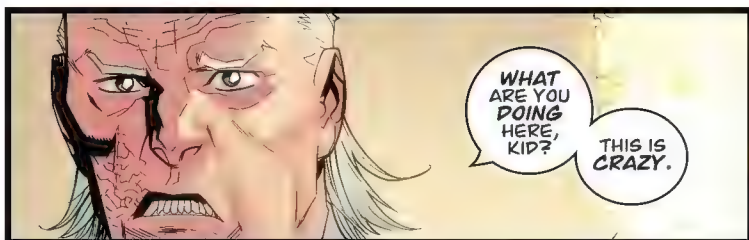
I DIDN'T
SEND IN THE
GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE...
WHICH I COULD
HAVE EASILY
DONE.

SO CUT
ME SOME
SLACK AND
HEAR ME
OUT.



I DON'T HAVE DINOSAURUS
WITH ME. YOU WOULDN'T
OUTRIGHT ATTACK ME
UNLESS YOU KNEW YOU
COULD GET HIM,
TOO.

I FIGURED
YOU WERE
MONITORING
THE PLACE. I
ACTUALLY WANT
TO TALK TO
YOU.



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE,
KID?

THIS IS
CRAZY.

YOU SAW THAT SOLAR PANEL
ARRAY... YOU **BUILT** IT. YOU
CAN'T ARGUE THAT IT WON'T
HELP PEOPLE. IT'S GOING
TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S LIVES,
AND HELP THE WHOLE
PLANET... AND IT COULD
LEAD TO MORE
LIKE IT.

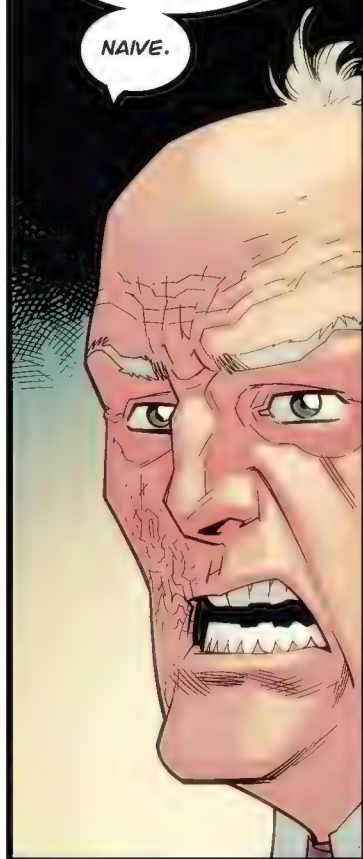
DINOSAURUS
DID THAT. HE DID
A HORRIBLE,
UNFORGIVABLE THING
TO ACCOMPLISH IT--
BUT HIS REASONING
WAS **SOUND**.

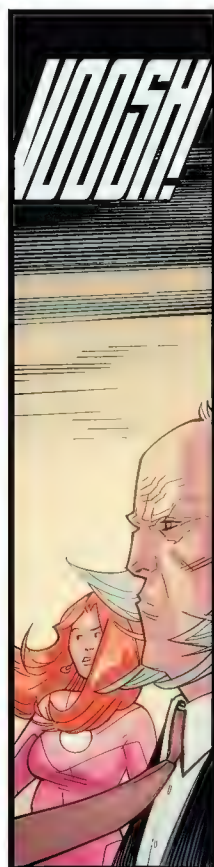
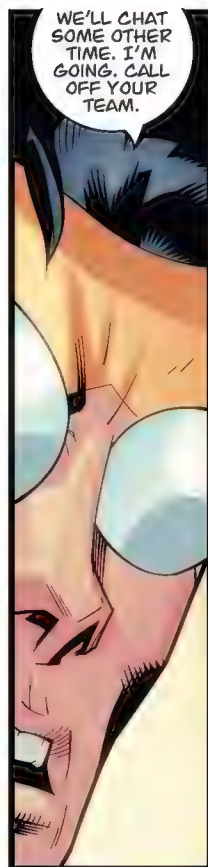
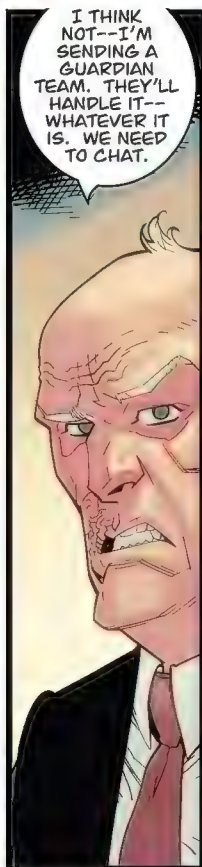
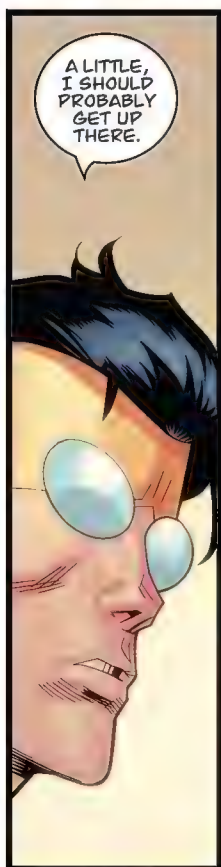
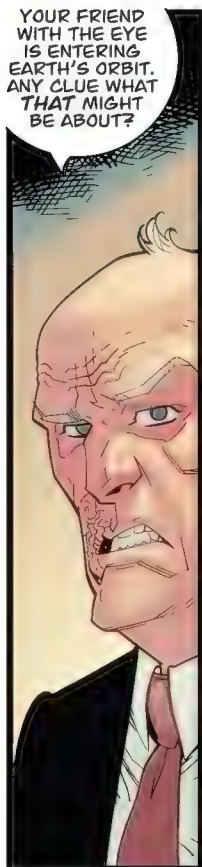
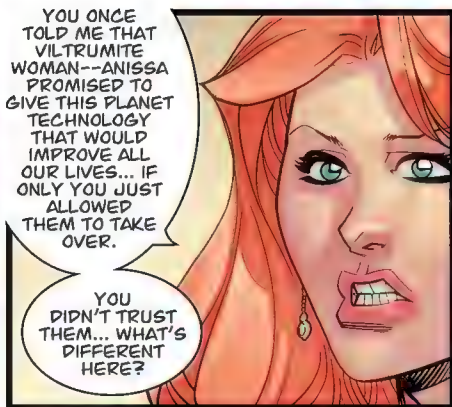
I CAN
GUIDE HIM,
PREVENT HIM
FROM CARRYING
OUT HIS PLANS IN A
WAY THAT HURTS
PEOPLE... AND HE
CAN HELP ME DO
THINGS THAT
ACTUALLY HELP
PEOPLE...
THINGS THAT
MATTER.

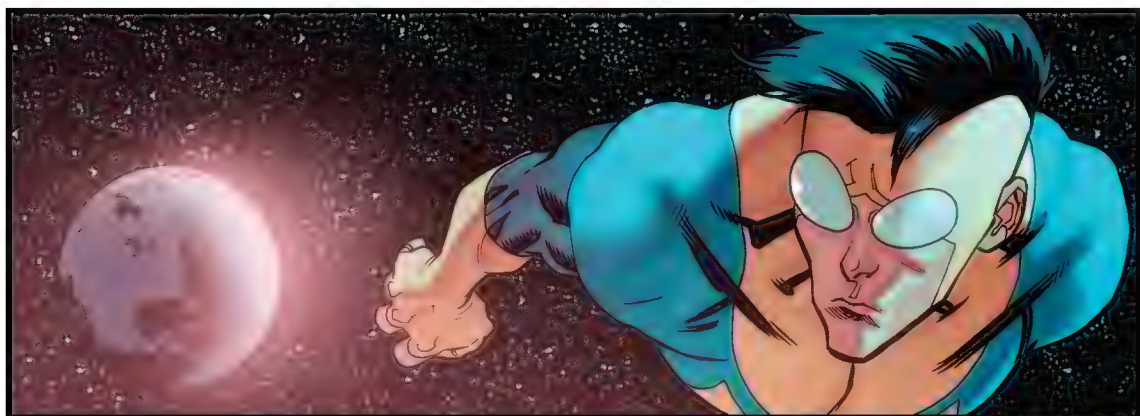


MARK... MY GOD, ONE
MINUTE YOU IMPRESS
ME WITH YOUR PLANNING
OF THIS MEETING,
THINKING ONE STEP AHEAD
OF ME... AND THE NEXT...
YOU COULDN'T
SOUND MORE...

NAVE.







WOW, THEY'VE GOT YOU BACK IN ONE PIECE-- YOU'D NEVER KNOW ANYTHING HAPPENED!



YEAH, THEY GREW MY SKIN OVER NEW MECHANICAL PARTS. THEY ALMOST FEEL NORMAL.

I DON'T MEAN TO INTERRUPT THIS REUNION, BUT WE'RE HERE FOR A REASON...



WHERE'S MOM AND DAD? DID THEY COME?



WELL, NO... THEY...

THEY REMAINED ON TALESCRIA. THERE'S A LOT TO DISCUSS. YOUR FATHER INFORMED ME OF THE VILTRUMITES' STATUS HERE ON EARTH, AND...



I'VE DEVISED A PLAN I NEED TO RUN PAST YOU.



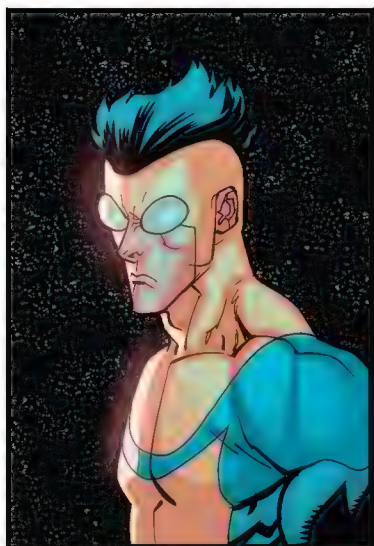


HAVE YOU
LOST YOUR
MIND?!



MARK, PLEASE. JUST
THINK THIS THROUGH...
I UNDERSTAND YOUR
INITIAL REACTION, BUT
YOU NEED TO WEIGH
THIS AGAINST THE
ATROCITIES THE
VILTRUMITES HAVE
COMMITTED
ALL OVER THE
UNIVERSE.

JUST
CONSIDER
IT...



THIS SEEMS
WRONG AT FIRST,
BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S
THE ONLY WAY WE
CAN SAVE THE
UNIVERSE. THIS
FIXES EVERYTHING.



NO... IT
DOESN'T.

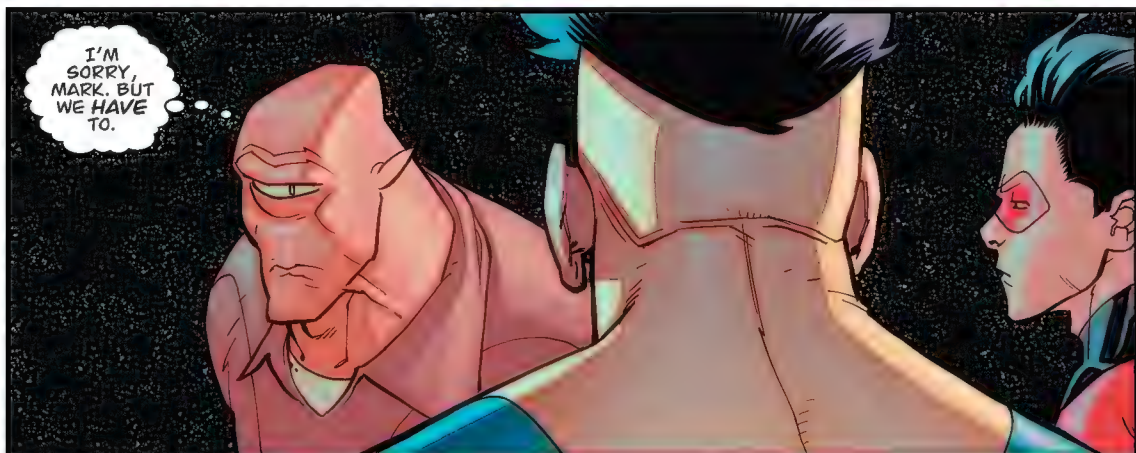
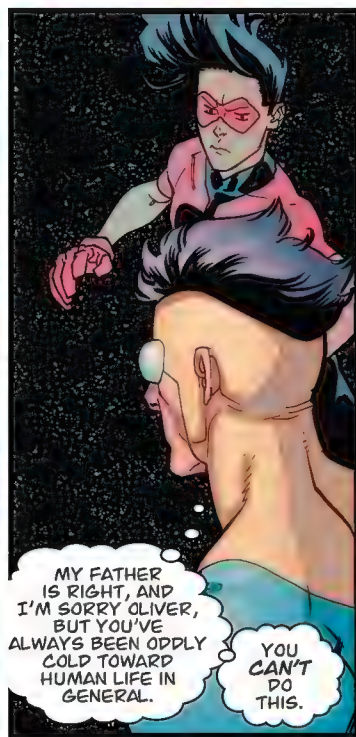
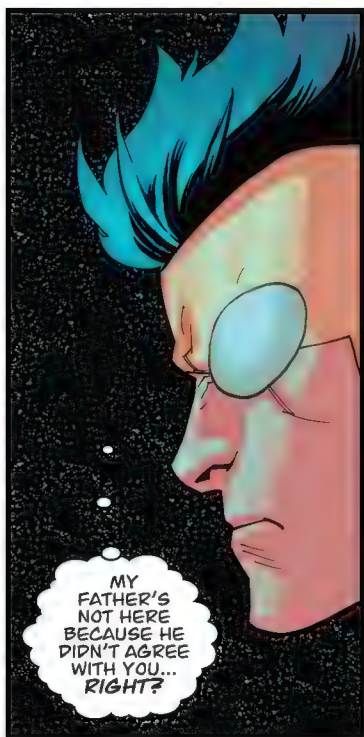
IF THERE'S
EVEN THE
SLIGHTEST CHANCE
THIS SCOURGE VIRUS
YOU HAVE WILL AFFECT
HUMANS... AND IT SOUNDS
LIKE IT'S PRETTY MUCH
CERTAIN... THERE'S
NO WAY YOU CAN
DO THIS.


ALLEN, THE
VILTRUMITES
KILLED NEARLY
ALL OF YOUR
PEOPLE...
HOW IS THIS
DIFFERENT?

IT'S DIFFERENT BECAUSE
ONCE THE VILTRUMITES
FEEL THEIR NUMBERS ARE
SUFFICIENT AND THEY'RE
THROUGH INTERBREEDING
WITH EARTH THEY WILL
RESUME THEIR MISSION
OF UNIVERSAL
CONQUEST.

THEN MORE
PEOPLE, LIKE MINE,
WILL BE PUSHED TO
THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION...
AND THAT'S ONLY THE
BEGINNING. THINK OF
WHAT THEY DID WITH THEIR
NUMBERS DWINDLING.
HOW MUCH **WORSE** WILL
THINGS BE WITH
THEIR FULL POWER
RESTORED?

IF I CAUSE
THE EXTINCTION
OF HUMANITY IN
ORDER TO RID US OF
THE VILTRUMITES--
THAT'S IT. IT STOPS
HERE AND THE HUMAN
RACE BECOMES A
WORTHY SACRIFICE
FOR THE GOOD OF
ALL LIFE IN THE
UNIVERSE.





DON'T ACT
SURPRISED,
ALLEN.

YOU KNEW I
COULD NEVER
LET YOU DO
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS.

IN FACT, I'M
ALMOST CERTAIN
THAT SOMEWHERE,
DEEP INSIDE, YOU
WANT ME TO
STOP YOU!

DON'T
BET ON
IT!

AND YOU--
DON'T **DO**
THIS, OLIVER.
HELP ME STOP
ALLEN.

THERE ARE
PEOPLE ON THAT
PLANET YOU KNOW--
AND COUNTLESS
OTHERS WHO ARE
INNOCENT. THEY
DON'T DESERVE TO DIE!

THIS
ISN'T
ABOUT
THEM!

OLIVER IS
RIGHT--
BUT ENOUGH
ARGUING!
YOU'RE
WASTING
TIME!

THIS HAS
TO BE DONE
QUICKLY--IT HAS
TO BE DONE **NOW**!
BEFORE THEY GET
A CHANCE TO
DETECT WHAT'S
HAPPENING!

YOU NEED
TO JUST LET
THIS HAPPEN.
TRUST THAT I KNOW
WHAT IS BEST. I
WAS MADE HEAD OF
THE COALITION OF
PLANETS FOR
A REASON.

BESIDES--
NOLAN
COULDN'T
STOP ME.

WHAT
CHANCE
DO YOU
HAVE?!



HE
HAS
ME.



CHAPTER 88

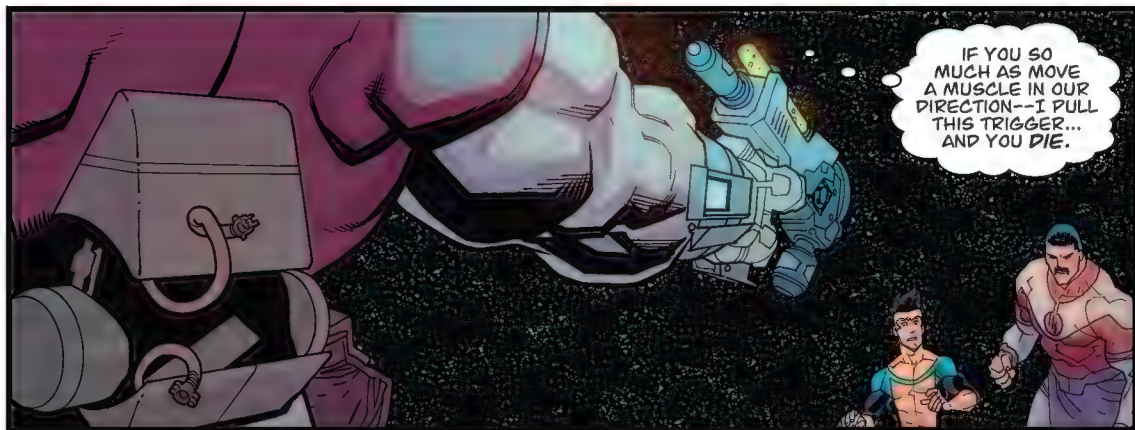






WELL, THERE'S A FEW REASONS THAT COME TO MIND RANGING FROM THE POIGNANT AND BOLD TO THE MUNDANE AND DESPERATE.

I COULD LIST THEM ALL, BUT THAT WOULD TAKE A WHILE. SO I'LL JUST DIVE INTO THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE...



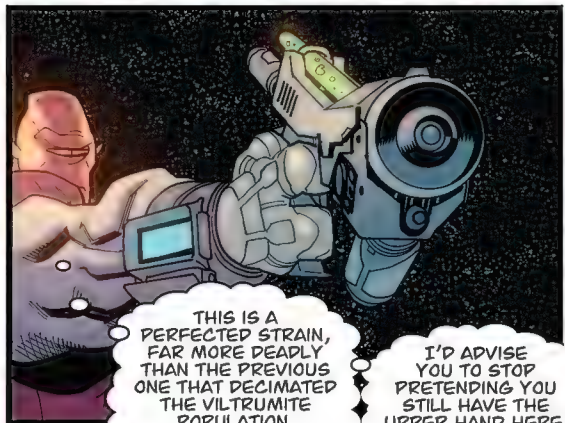
IF YOU SO MUCH AS MOVE A MUSCLE IN OUR DIRECTION--I PULL THIS TRIGGER... AND YOU DIE.



YOU CLEARLY HAVE NO IDEA HOW HARD I'VE BEEN FIGHTING THE URGE TO KILL YOU SIMPLY TO SEE THAT GIANT RIDICULOUS UNOPAN EYE BURST FORTH FROM YOUR SHATTERED SKULL...

NOW YOU SHOW ME IMMEASURABLE DISRESPECT BY THREATENING ME WITH THE SCOURGE VIRUS... THE THING THAT TURNED MY HOME PLANET INTO A TOMB... BEFORE YOU HELPED ITS CREATOR, THAEDEUS DESTROY IT...

YOU HAVE NO IDEA THE RESTRAINT I'M EXERCISING AT THIS MOMENT...



THIS IS A PERFECTED STRAIN, FAR MORE DEADLY THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE THAT DECIMATED THE VILTRUMITE POPULATION.

I'D ADVISE YOU TO STOP PRETENDING YOU STILL HAVE THE UPPER HAND HERE.



NO MATTER THE LEVEL OF PERFECTION YOU'VE ACHIEVED WITH THIS NEW STRAIN... I KNOW I COULD SEPARATE YOUR HEAD FROM YOUR BODY BEFORE THE VIRUS TAKES EFFECT ON ME.

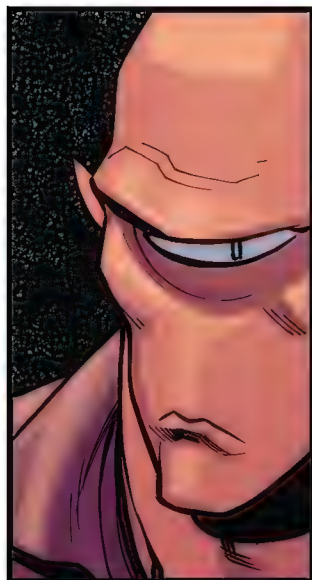
JUST SO WE'RE CLEAR ON THE TERMS OF THIS STANDOFF.



OKAY, SO
IT'S OVER, RIGHT?
ALLEN--YOU'RE
PACKING IT IN AND
GOING HOME?

THRAGG KNOWS--
YOU'RE NOT CATCHING
THEM BY SURPRISE--
YOU RELEASE THIS THING
INTO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE
NOW AND THEY JUST TAKE
OFF, LEAVING THE PLANET
BEFORE THE VIRUS
SPREADS.

SO THAT'S
IT--YOUR
PLAN IS
OFFICIALLY
FOILED.



COME ON,
GUYS... LET'S
NOT DO
ANYTHING
CRAZY,
OKAY?

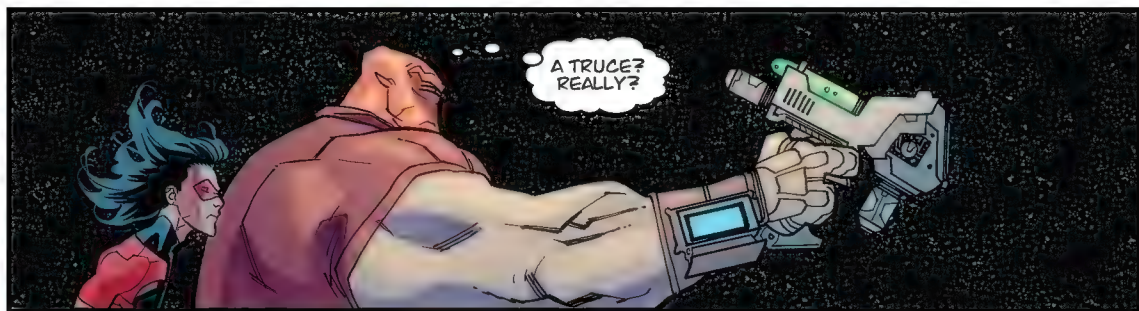
I'M SO
TOTALLY
UNPREPARED
FOR CRAZY
RIGHT NOW.



LET ME
BE CLEAR.
THERE WILL
BE NO FIGHT
HERE... NOT
NOW.

AS THE NEW HEAD OF THE
COALITION OF PLANETS, ALLEN...
I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE
UNDER TREMENDOUS PRESSURE...
AND NEED TO PROVE YOURSELF
WORTHY OF THE
APPOINTMENT.

I WOULD
LIKE TO
PROPOSE A
TRUCE.



SO AGAIN, I PROPOSE A TRUCE.
WE OCCUPY THIS PLANET, IT'S
NOT A HOSTILE OCCUPATION, OUR
PRESENCE IS LARGELY UNKNOWN
BY THE POPULATION. YOU ARE
UNCOMFORTABLE WITH IT... BUT
I AM UNCOMFORTABLE WITH
YOU HAVING THE SCOURGE
VIRUS IN HAND, AT
THE READY.

YOU HAVE THE
ABILITY TO STRIKE AT
US WITH THIS VIRUS AT
ANY TIME. WE HAVE THE
ABILITY TO SLAUGHTER
EVERY LIVING THING ON
THIS PLANET--AND
RESUME OUR WAR WITH
THE COALITION.

WE ARE IN A
STANDOFF. I SAY
WE ALLOW OUR
POSITION TO REMAIN
AS SUCH, WITH EACH
PARTY KEEPING
THE OTHER IN
CHECK.

WE WILL LIVE
HERE, NOTHING
MORE... AND IN
RETURN, YOU WILL
NOT ATTEMPT
TO KILL US.

I DON'T
KNOW THAT
I CAN
MAKE THAT
WORK.

LET ME
HELP YOU.
YOU ARE
BACKED INTO
A CORNER.

YOU
HAVE NO
CHOICE.

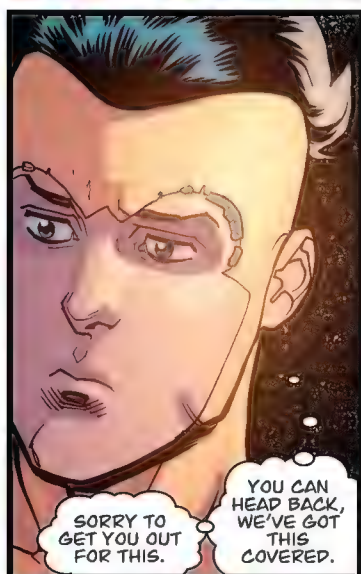
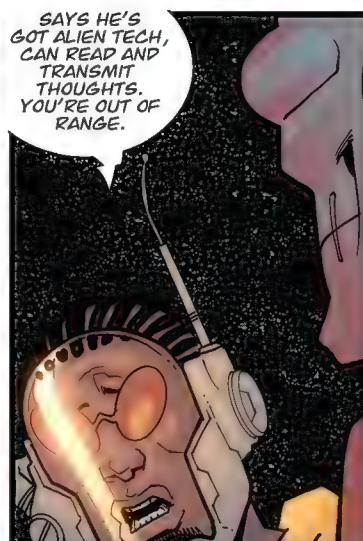
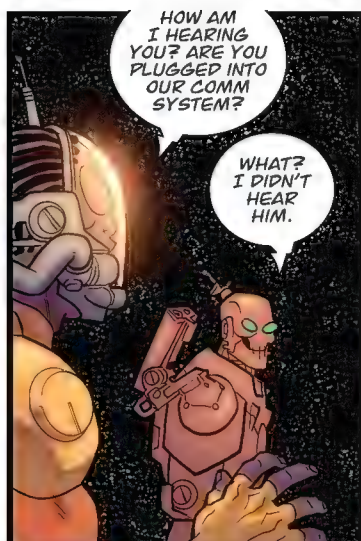
THE HELL WE DON'T!
I'M WILLING TO BET
YOUR PEOPLE ARE IN
DEEP COVER... I BET
THIS VIRUS WOULD GET
TO THEM BEFORE THEY
COULD GET OFF WORLD,
WE MAY NOT GET
ALL OF YOU,
BUT--

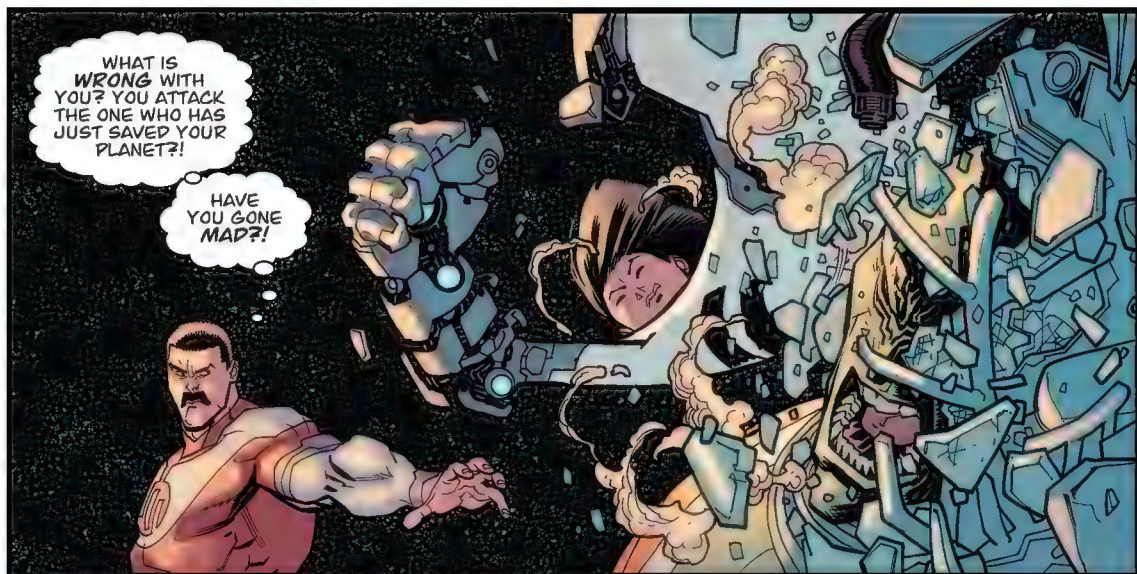
OLIVER...
STOP.

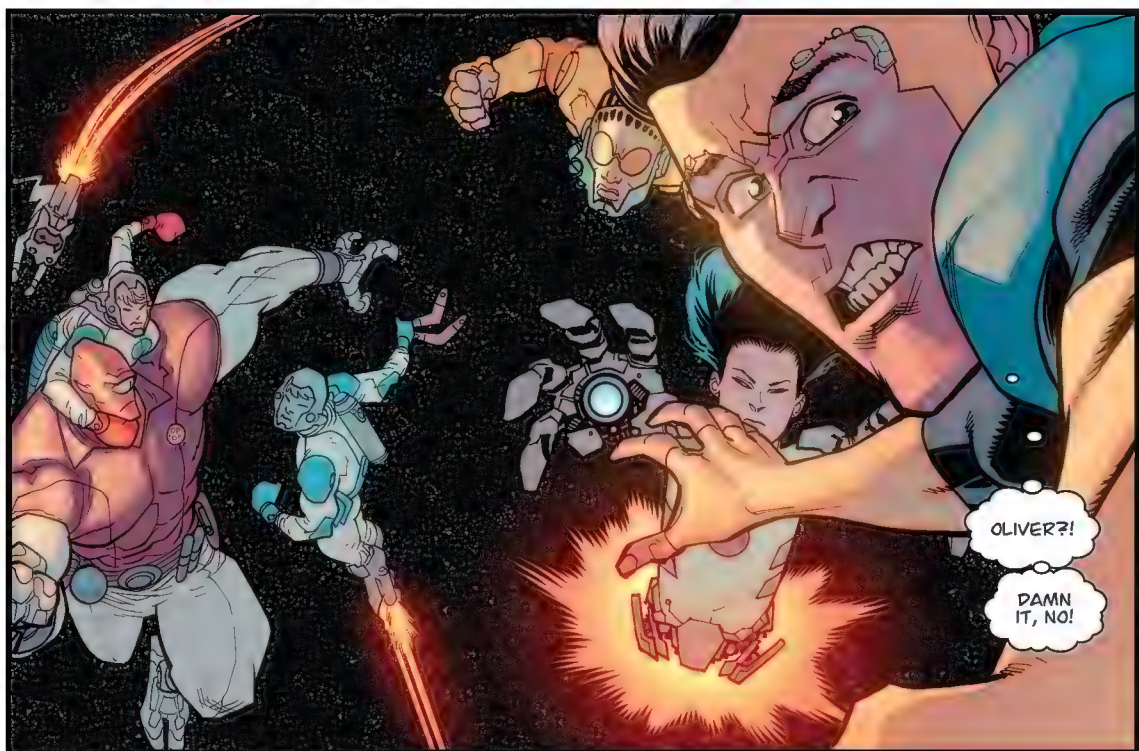
THRAGG
IS RIGHT.

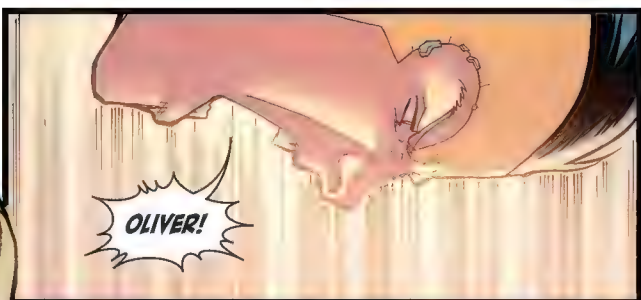
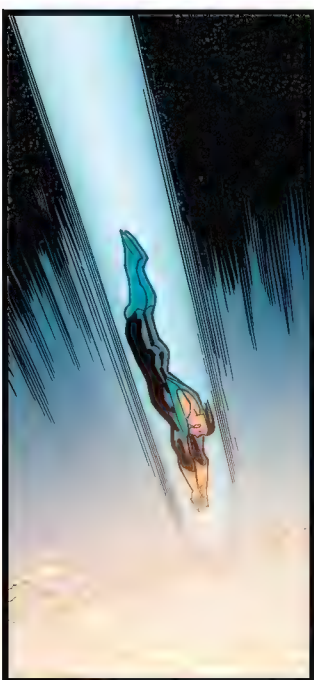
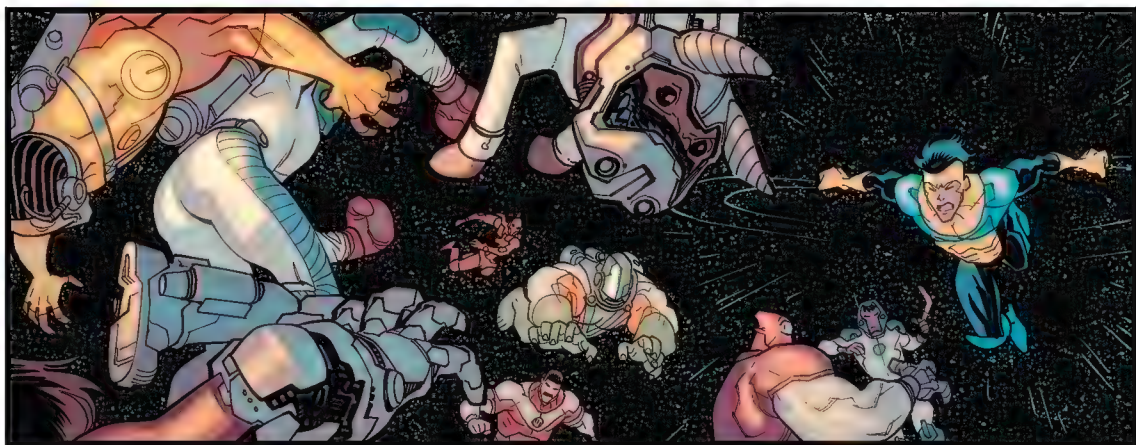


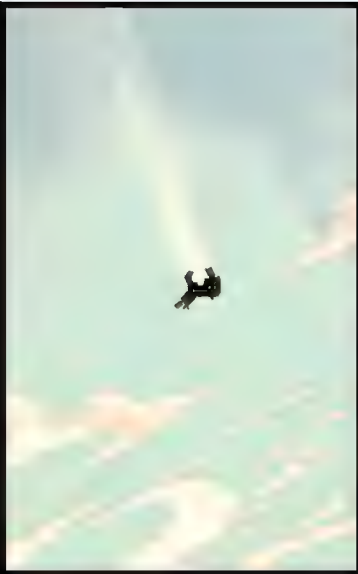
OH,
WHAT THE
HECK?













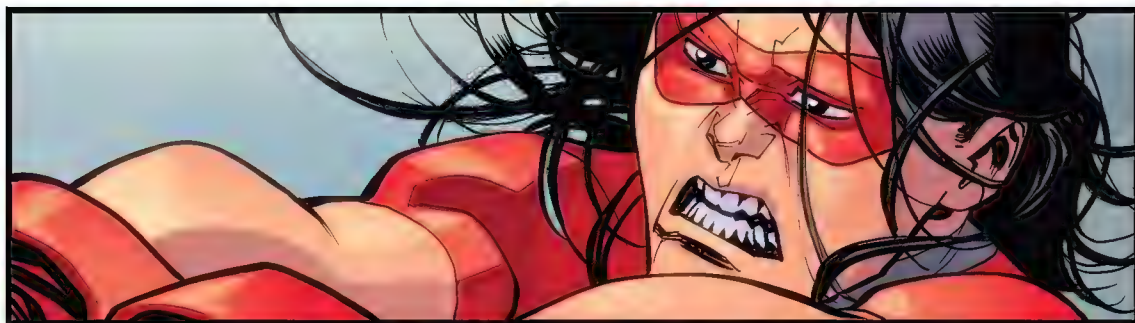


I'M THROUGH ARGUING
WITH YOU ABOUT THIS!
I'M SICK OF IT! YOU'RE
WRONG! AND NOW
YOU'VE GOT ALLEN
RECONSIDERING---

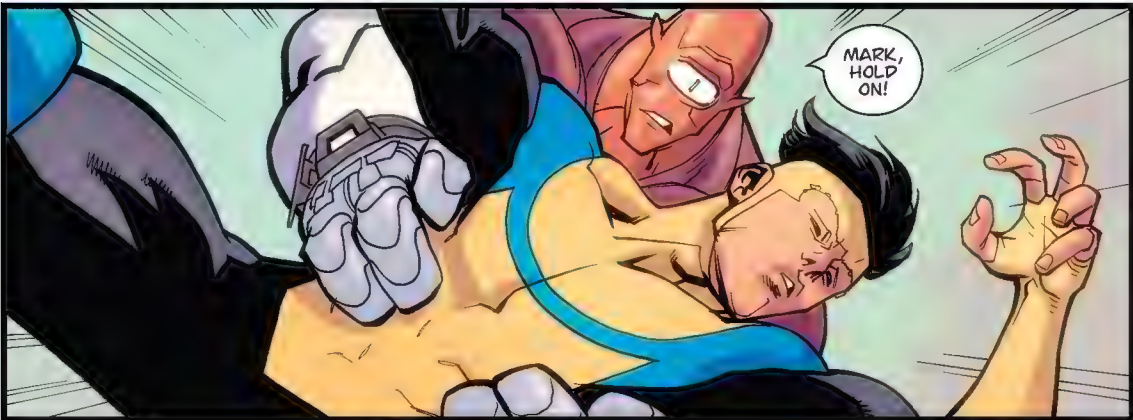
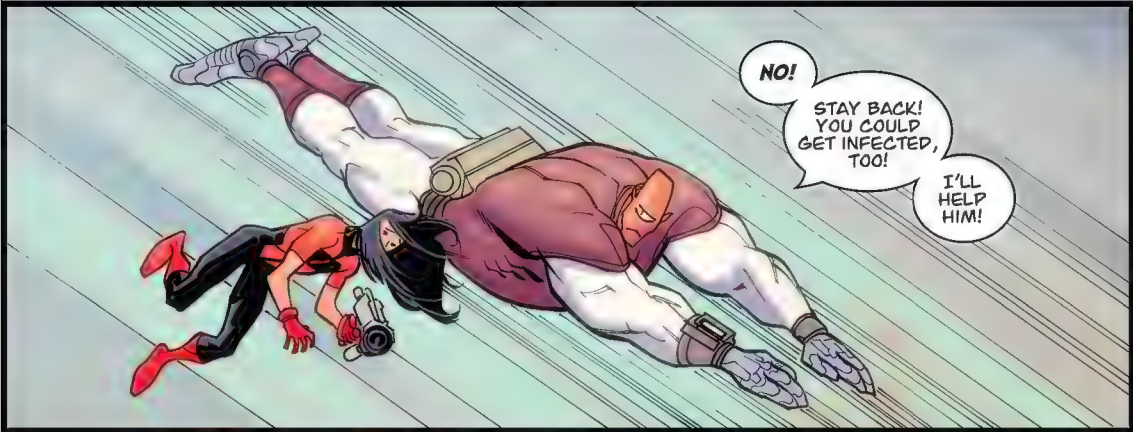
THIS
HAS TO BE
DONE!

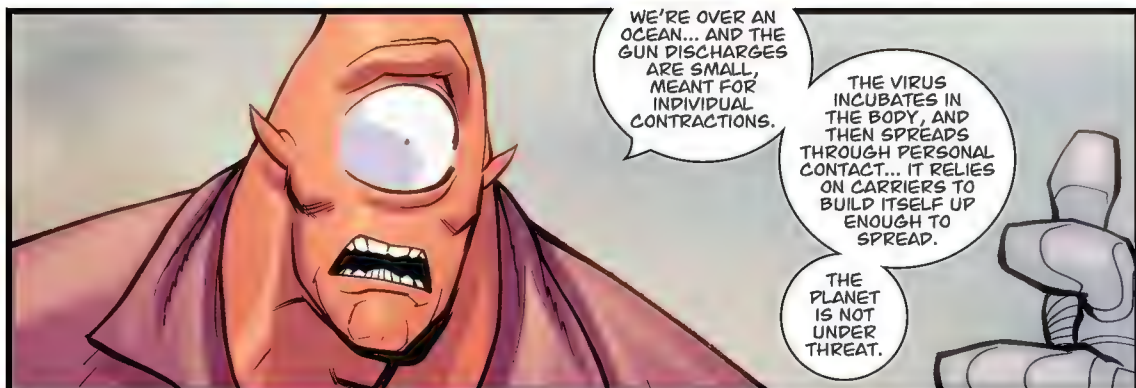
NO,
OLIVER...
JUST...

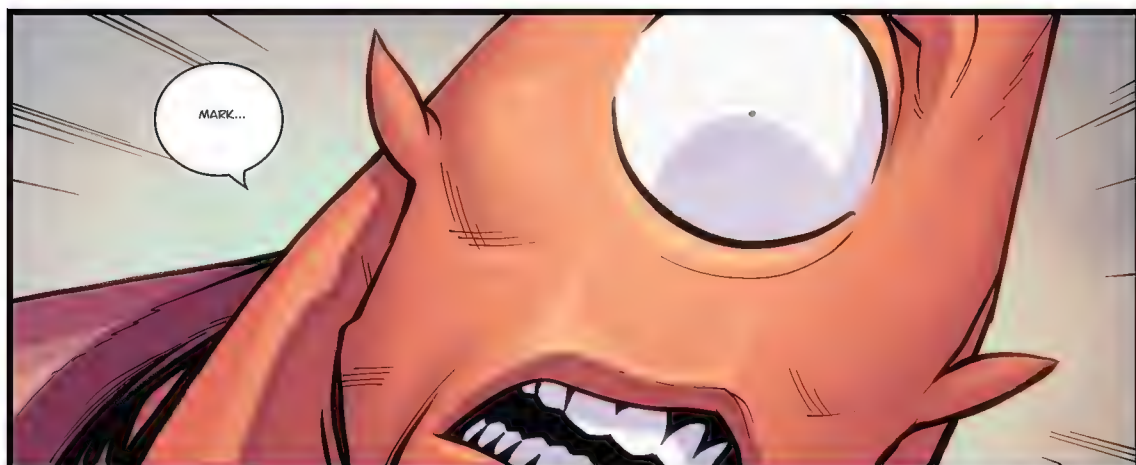
PLEASE.













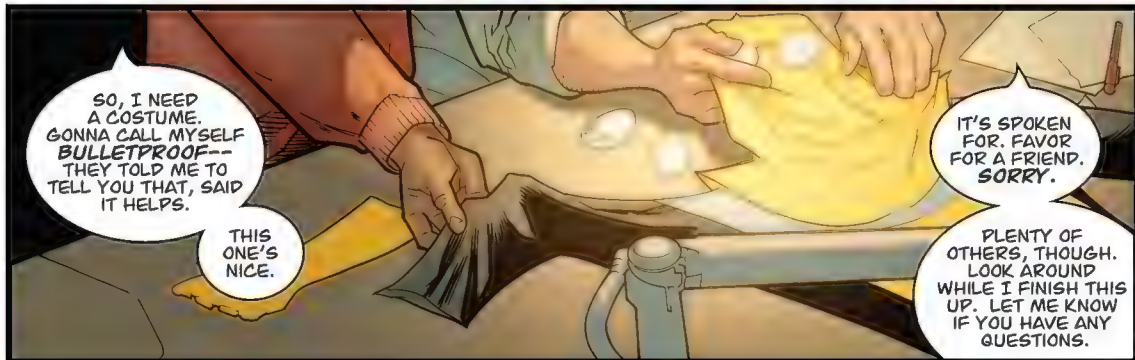
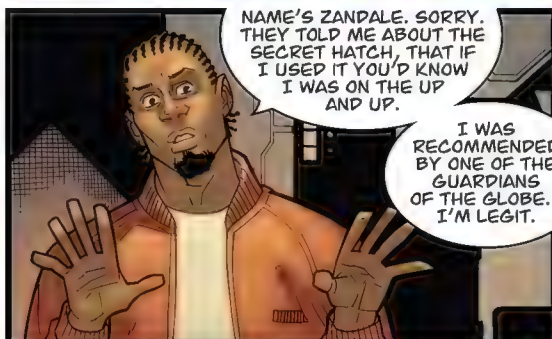
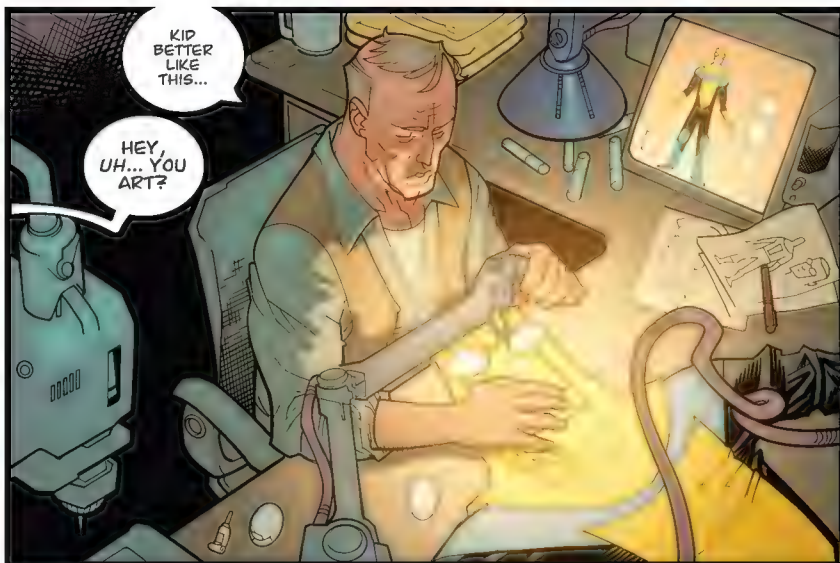
WHAT?

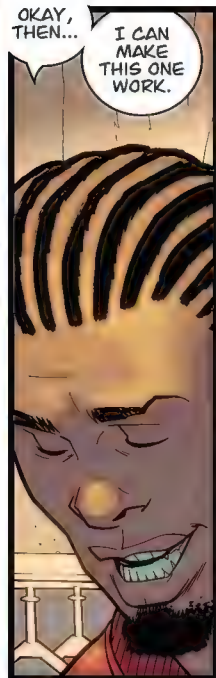
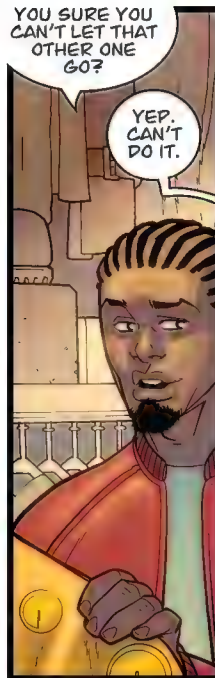
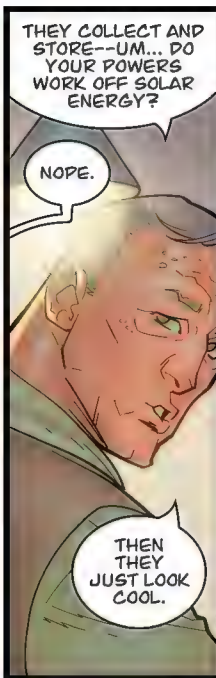
ALLEN,
I'M FINE.



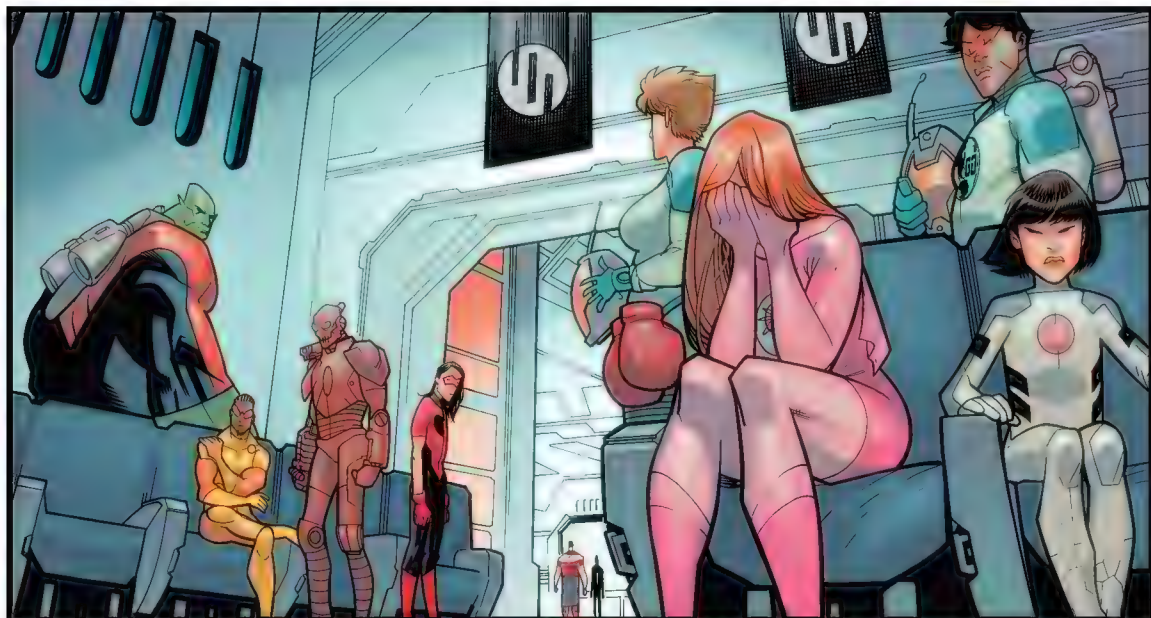
CHAPTER 89







THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON.



SO, YOU ARE
THE ONE WHO
IS IN CHARGE
OF PLANET
EARTH?

NOT
HOW I'D
PUT IT.

IN
CHARGE
OF ITS
PROTECTION,
YES. I'M NOT
RUNNING THE
SHOW OR
ANYTHING.



I HAVE A MOON BASE
NOT TWO HUNDRED
MILES FROM HERE, AND
WE DID NOT DETECT THIS
SHIP. HOW LONG
HAVE YOU BEEN
HERE?

MONTHS.
I GATHER
MARK GRAYSON
DIDN'T TELL
YOU ABOUT OUR
AGREEMENT. FOR
THE BETTER,
REALLY.

AND
I'M JUST
SUPPOSED TO
ALLOW ALL
THIS? WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING HERE?



YOU SIMPLY
HAVE NO **CHOICE**
IN THE MATTER.
THERE IS NOTHING YOU
CAN DO. YOU DID NOT
DETECT OUR PRESENCE
HERE, BECAUSE OUR
TECHNOLOGY IS **VASTLY**
MORE ADVANCED
THAN YOURS.

YOU MUST
HONOR THE
AGREEMENT WE
HAVE WITH MARK.
OTHERWISE, WE
WILL **DESTROY**
YOU.

WE WILL
COEXIST IN
PEACE BECAUSE
TO DO OTHERWISE
WOULD DRAW THE
ATTENTION OF THE
COALITION OF PLANETS,
WHICH COULD LEAD TO
THE EXTINCTION OF
MY PEOPLE.

AND, IT
APPEARS,
YOURS AS
WELL.

AS TO
OUR CURRENT
SITUATION. WE
HAVE DEALT WITH
THE SCOURGE
VIRUS BEFORE.
WE KNOW HOW
TO HANDLE
IT.



WE ARE THE BOY'S ONLY CHANCE OF SURVIVAL. HIS LIFE RESTS IN OUR HANDS.

WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO SAVE HIM, DESPITE OUR HISTORY AS BITTER ENEMIES.

WE WILL DO THIS TO SHOW HIM THAT WE ARE BETTER THAN THE COALITION, WHO CAUSED HIS CURRENT SITUATION.

BUT ALSO OUT OF RESPECT FOR HIM, AND BECAUSE IF WE DO ALLOW HIM TO DIE, I IMAGINE THAT WOULD CREATE TENSION BETWEEN US AND THE PEOPLE OF YOUR PLANET, *YOU* CHIEF AMONG THEM.



YES, IT WOULD.



YOU SHOULD KNOW, HIS CONDITION WILL GET WORSE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER. HE IS ONLY IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE VIRUS.

AND THIS IS A NEW, **STRONGER** STRAIN. WE'RE NOT YET COMPLETELY SURE OF WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH.

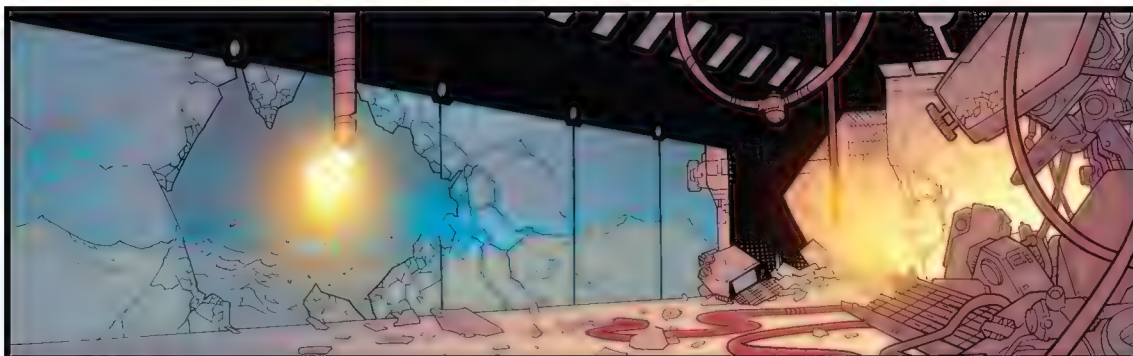
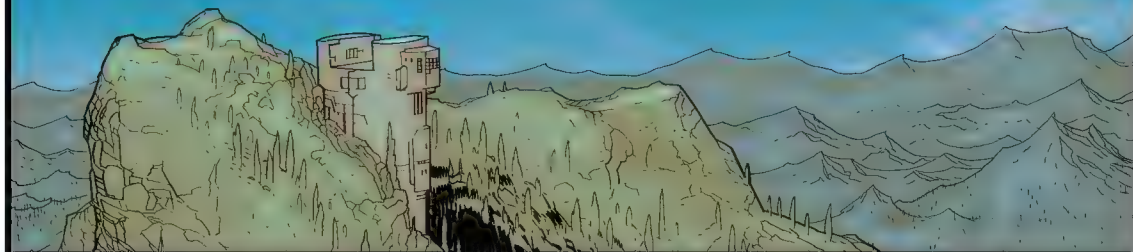
WE ARE NOT CERTAIN HE WILL SURVIVE.



PLEASE...

...DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN.

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION,
THE SECRET BASE OF
DINOSAURUS.



NGGH.

OKAY.

IT WOULD
APPEAR WE
ARE MORE OR
LESS EVENLY
MATCHED.

ACTUALLY,
I'VE BEEN
RESTRAINING
MYSELF QUITE
A BIT THIS
ENTIRE
TIME.

I HAVE NO
INTENTION OF
HURTING YOU.
I'M FRIENDS
WITH
INVINCIBLE.

IT WOULD
APPEAR WE
ARE MORE OR
LESS EVENLY
MATCHED.

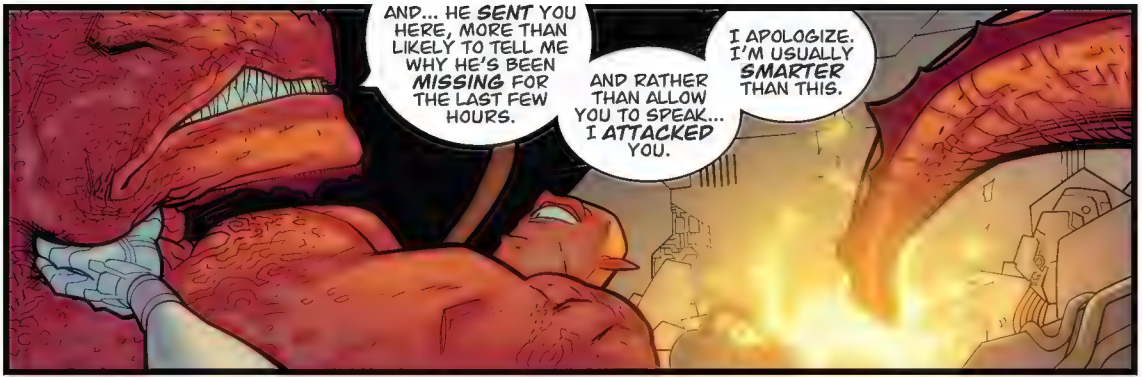
ACTUALLY,
I'VE BEEN
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MYSELF QUITE
A BIT THIS
ENTIRE
TIME.

I HAVE NO
INTENTION OF
HURTING YOU.
I'M FRIENDS
WITH
INVINCIBLE.

IT WOULD
APPEAR WE
ARE MORE OR
LESS EVENLY
MATCHED.

ACTUALLY,
I'VE BEEN
RESTRAINING
MYSELF QUITE
A BIT THIS
ENTIRE
TIME.

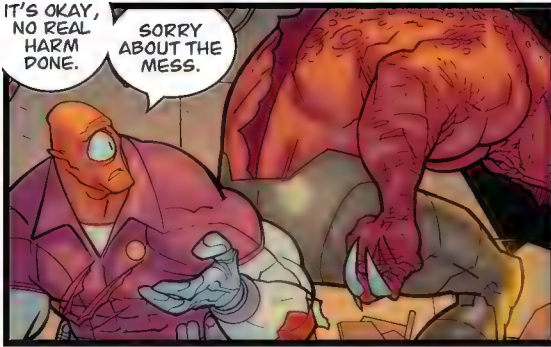
I HAVE NO
INTENTION OF
HURTING YOU.
I'M FRIENDS
WITH
INVINCIBLE.



AND... HE SENT YOU
HERE, MORE THAN
LIKELY TO TELL ME
WHY HE'S BEEN
MISSING FOR
THE LAST FEW
HOURS.

AND RATHER
THAN ALLOW
YOU TO SPEAK...
I ATTACKED
YOU.

I APOLOGIZE.
I'M USUALLY
SMARTER
THAN THIS.



IT'S OKAY,
NO REAL
HARM
DONE.

SORRY
ABOUT THE
MESS.



YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND,
I'VE NOT HAD MANY
DEALINGS WITH ACTUAL
ALIENS FROM OTHER
PLANETS.

YOUR
APPEARANCE
STARTLED ME.

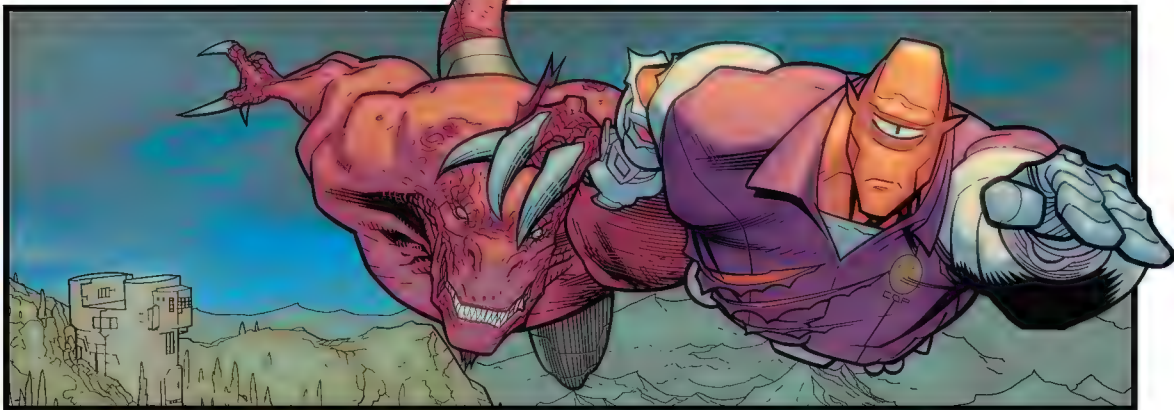


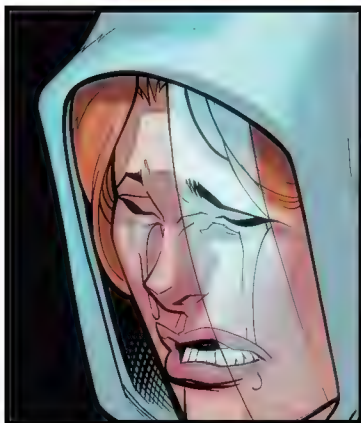
MY
APPEARANCE--?!

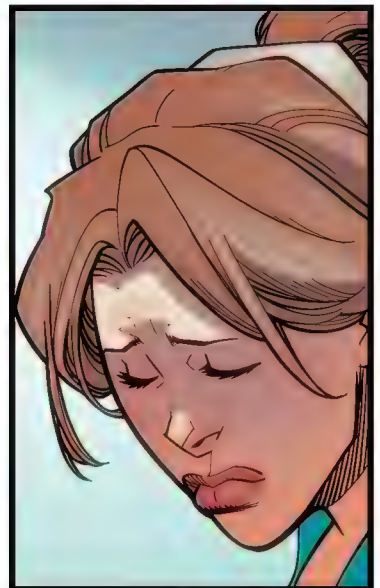
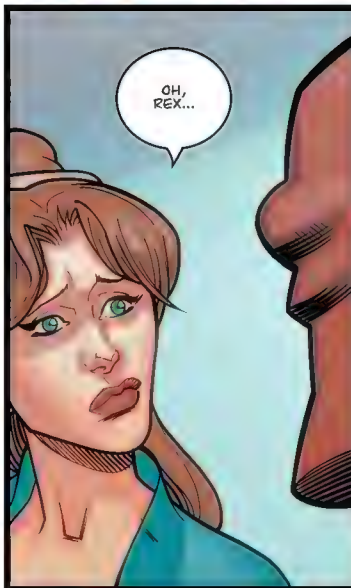
THIS WAS NO PICNIC FOR
ME EITHER, MAN. YOU
LOOK TOO MUCH LIKE
A RAGNAR.

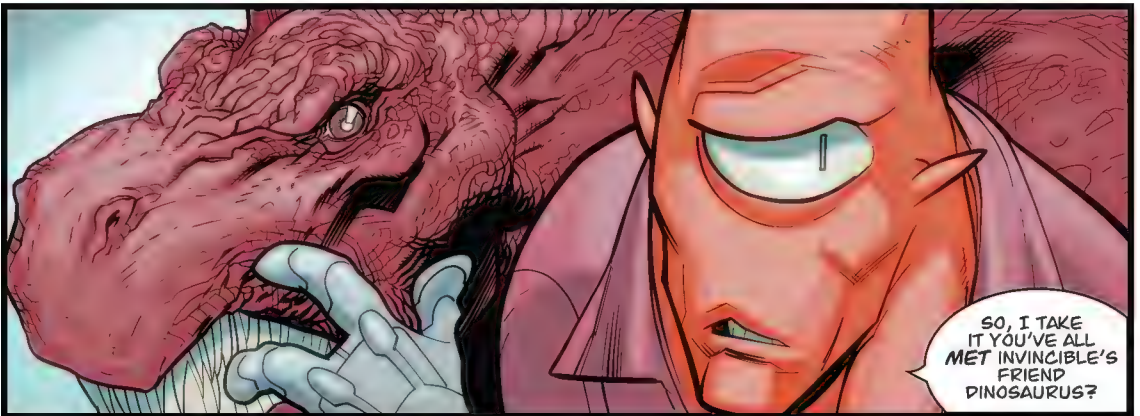
WHAT'S A--
NEVER MIND.
WHY ARE YOU
HERE? WHAT'S
GOING ON WITH
INVINCIBLE?

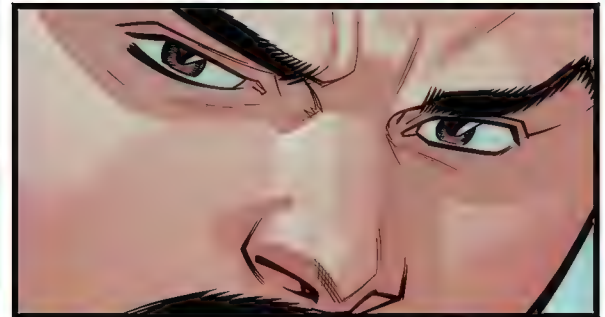
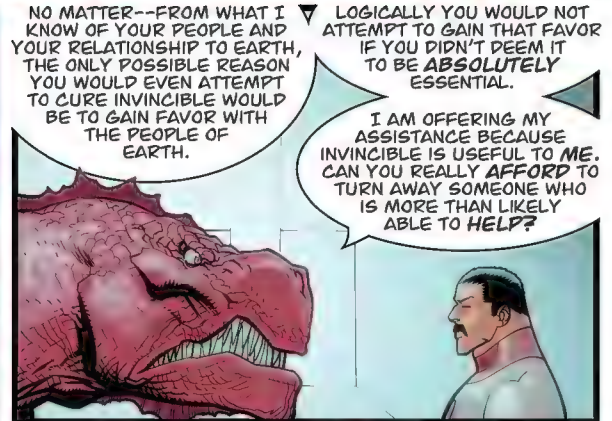
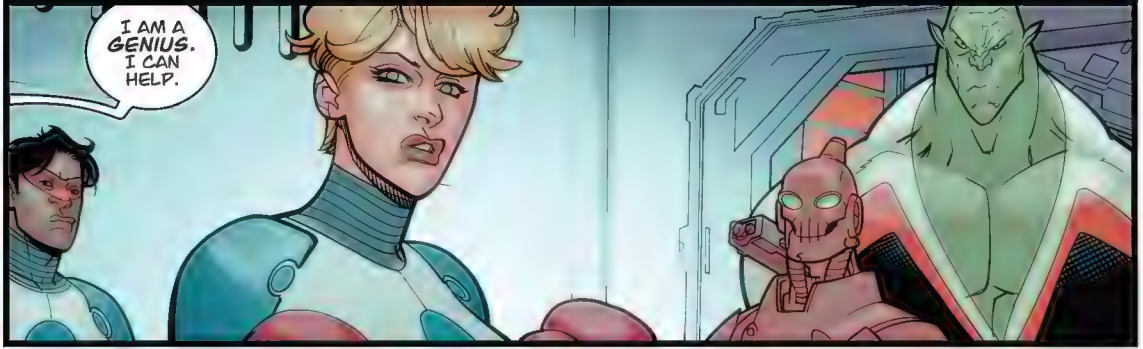
I'LL
EXPLAIN
ON THE
WAY.



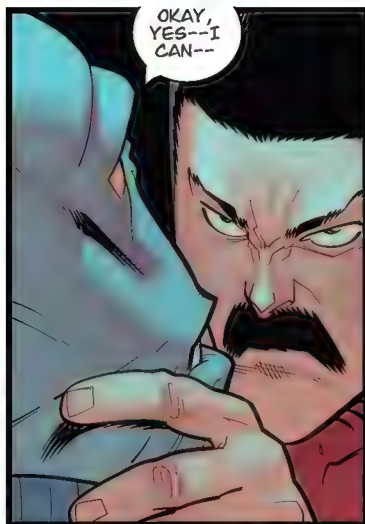
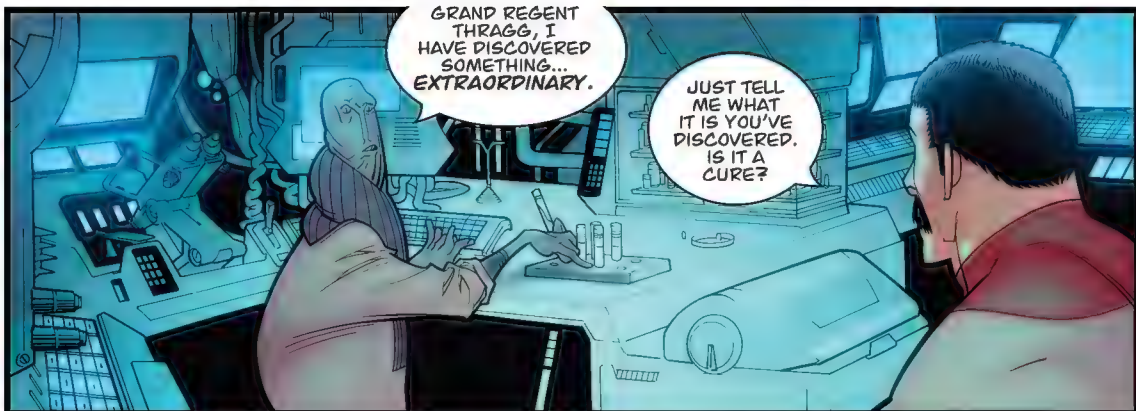




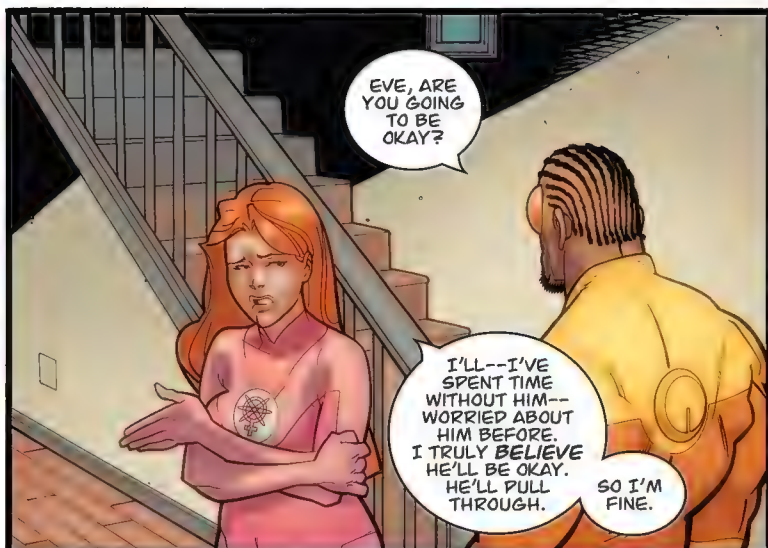
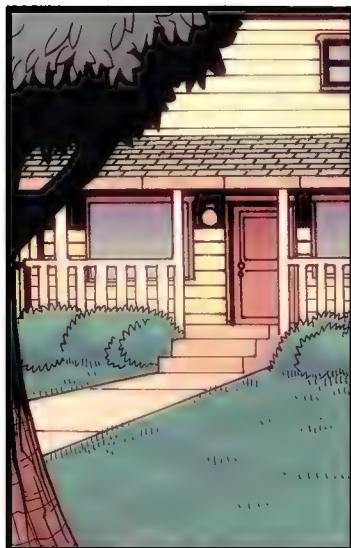












EVE, ARE YOU GOING TO BE OKAY?

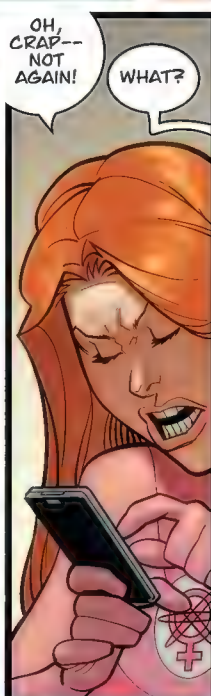
I'LL--I'VE SPENT TIME WITHOUT HIM-- WORRIED ABOUT HIM BEFORE. I TRULY BELIEVE HE'LL BE OKAY. HE'LL PULL THROUGH.

SO I'M FINE.



WELL, IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, DON'T HESITATE TO--

DEEP!
DEEP!



OH, CRAP-- NOT AGAIN!

WHAT?



SOME MONSTER IS TEARING DOWN A POWER STATION. AND IT'S ONE OF INVINCIBLE, INC.'S FEW REMAINING CLIENTS.

I DON'T CARE--I CAN'T-- BUT THAT BUSINESS IS JUST OVER.



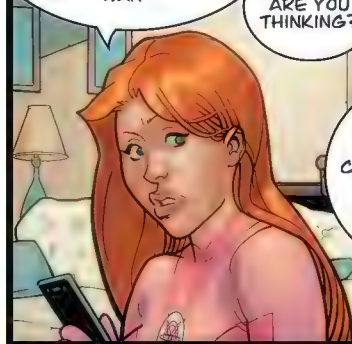
I'D BE HAPPY TO--

NO, LAST TIME YOU HELPED OUT, WHEN INVINCIBLE WAS IN SPACE--THE CLIENTS ASKED FOR REFUNDS. YOU DID A GOOD JOB, BUT THEY CLAIM THEY "PAID FOR INVINCIBLE."



HM.

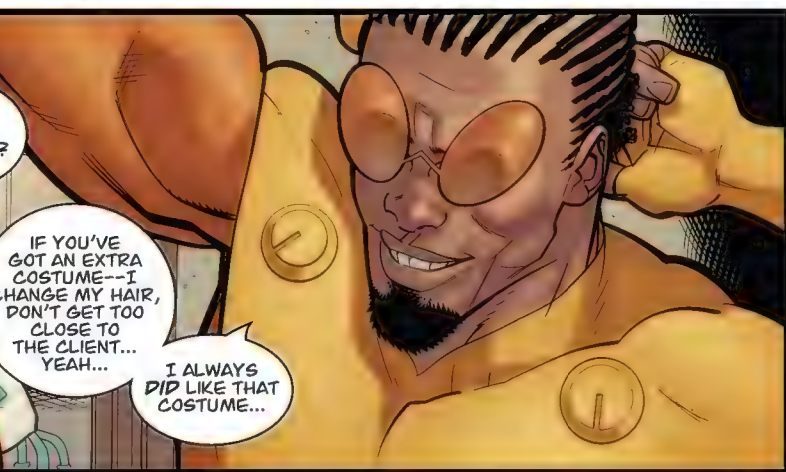
IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME. WITH INVINCIBLE OFF HELPING DINOSAURUS, PEOPLE WERE BOUND TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON EVENTUALLY. WAIT--



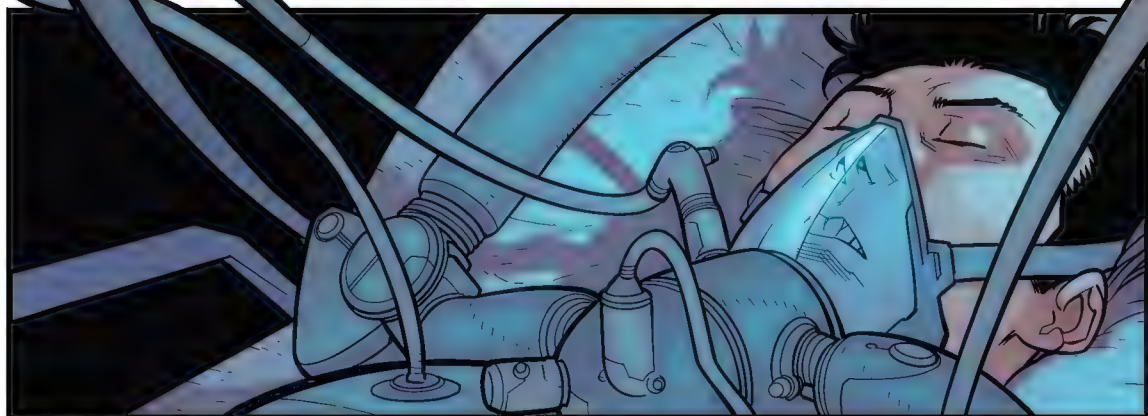
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

IF YOU'VE GOT AN EXTRA COSTUME--I CHANGE MY HAIR, DON'T GET TOO CLOSE TO THE CLIENT... YEAH...

I ALWAYS DID LIKE THAT COSTUME...









CHAPTER 90







THE LAST REMAINING
VILTRUMITE WARSHIP,
STATIONED ON THE MOON.



EXCUSE
ME.



HOW HAVE
YOU GAINED
ACCESS TO
MY--?!



CALM YOURSELF. I
TRUST YOU FAR LESS
THAN YOU TRUST ME.
I'VE TAPPED INTO
YOUR SYSTEM, I KNOW
THE LAYOUT WELL
ENOUGH TO FIND YOUR
QUARTERS... AND
ESCAPE IF I
NEED TO.

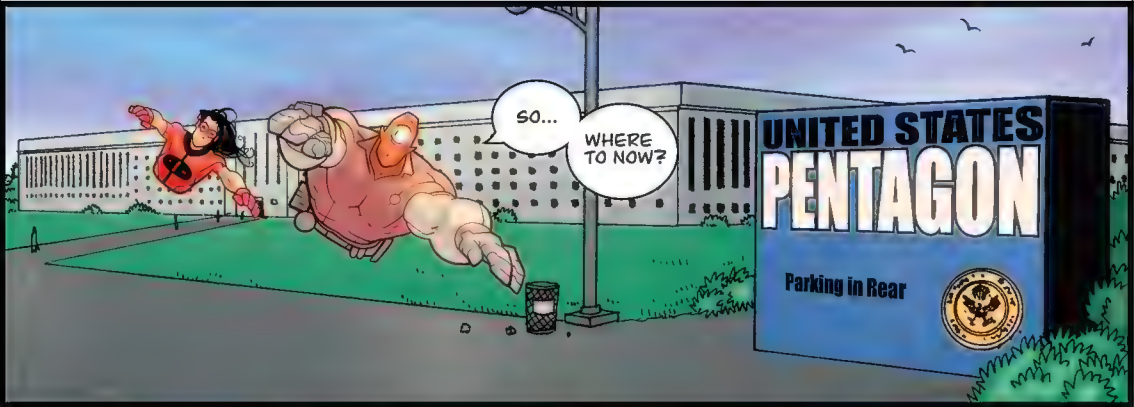
I'VE MADE SOME ADVANCES,
BUT THERE ARE SOME NOTES
I'M CURRENTLY UNABLE TO
DECIPHER. COULD YOU ALLOW
ME ACCESS TO THE SCIENTIST
WHOSE WORK I'M STUDYING?
I HAVE SOME
QUESTIONS.



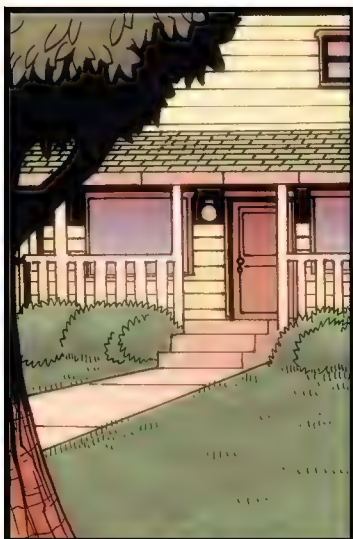
NO, I
CANNOT.
HE'S...

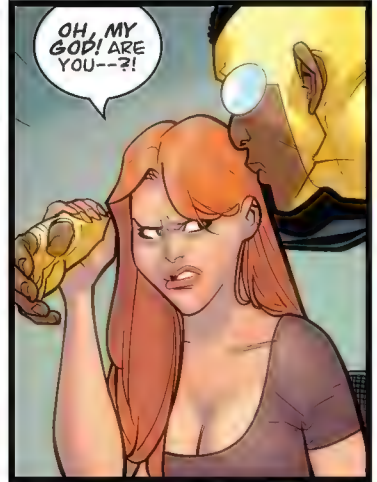
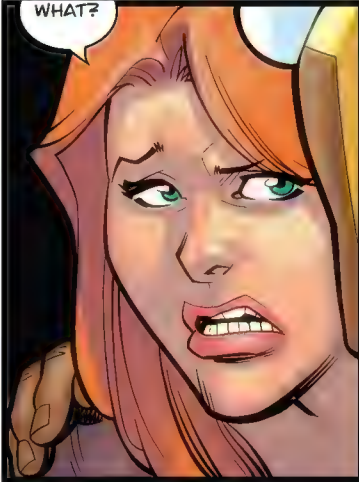
...UNAVAILABLE.













I'M TOLD THAT THE PERIOD OF TIME WHERE YOU CAN PASS ON THE SCOURGE VIRUS TO OTHERS... HAS PASSED.

ALL THIS TIME WE'VE BEEN STUDYING YOU, THE VIRUS, YOUR DNA... ALL THIS HARD WORK HAS PROVEN UNNECESSARY. YOU'RE GOING TO SURVIVE.

IT IS RARE FOR ONE AS YOUNG AS YOU TO BE ABLE TO FEND OFF THE SCOURGE VIRUS NATURALLY... THIS IS SOMETHING THAT HAS STUMPED MY SCIENTISTS...

...BUT I KNOW WHY.

OF COURSE YOU WILL SURVIVE THIS VIRUS... FAILING TO DO SO WOULD BETRAY YOUR BLOODLINE.

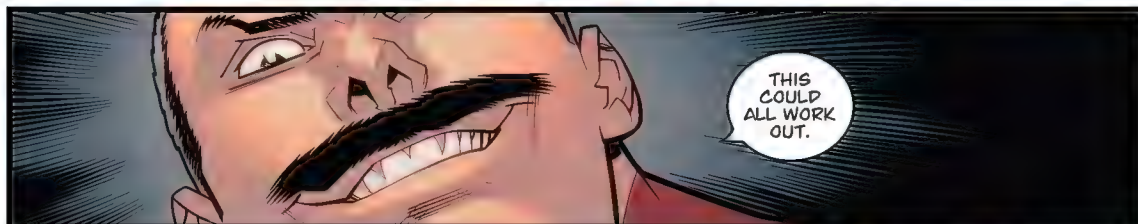
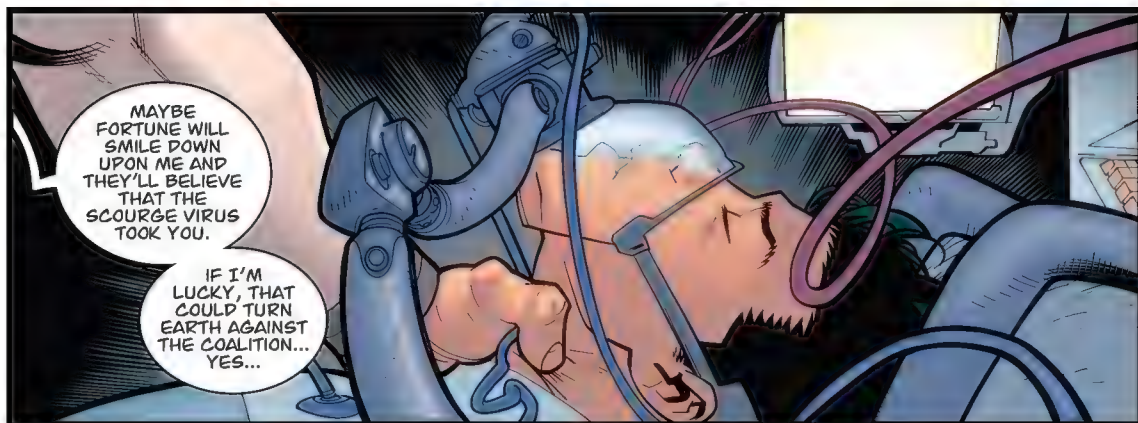
FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS I HAVE ACTED AS GRAND REGENT... CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF LOCATING THE LOST SON OF ARGALL, PLACING HIM ON THE THRONE OF VILTRUM...

YOUR FATHER... YOU... NO.

I WILL NOT YIELD MY POSITION TO TRAITORS.



IF I HAVE TO FORFEIT OUR TIME HERE ON EARTH... SO BE IT.



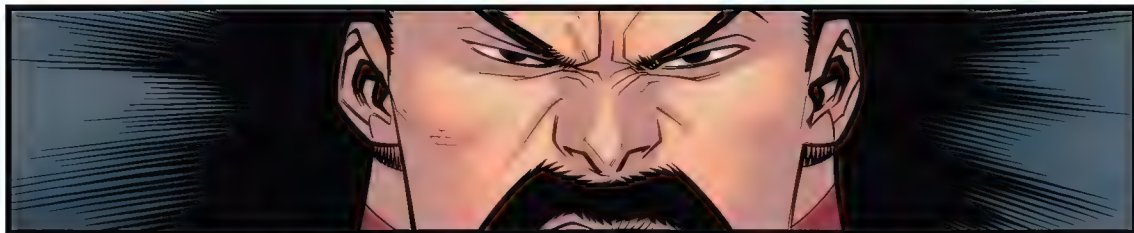
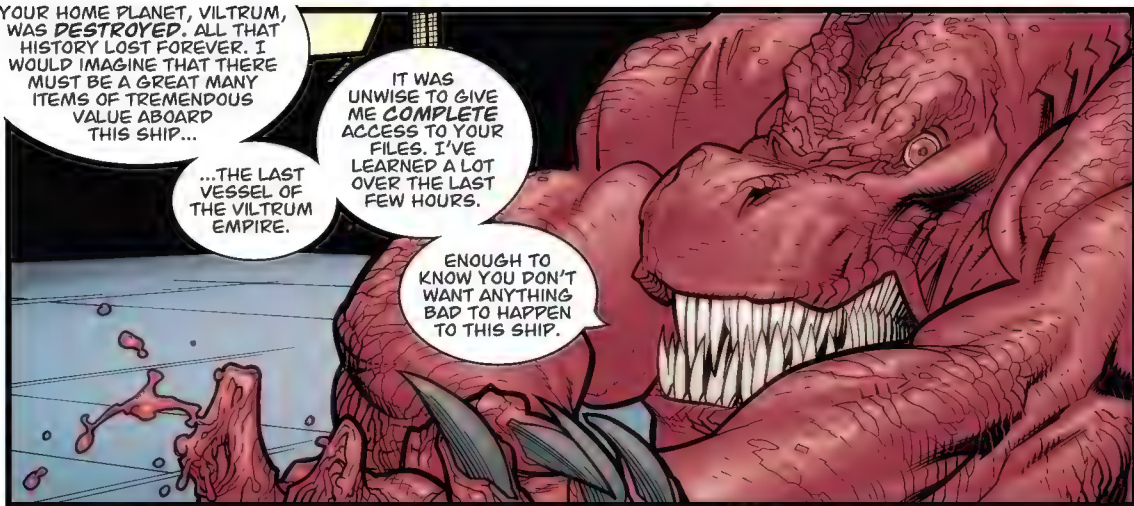


YOUR HOME PLANET, VILTRUM,
WAS DESTROYED. ALL THAT
HISTORY LOST FOREVER. I
WOULD IMAGINE THAT THERE
MUST BE A GREAT MANY
ITEMS OF TREMENDOUS
VALUE ABOARD
THIS SHIP...

...THE LAST
VESSEL OF
THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE.

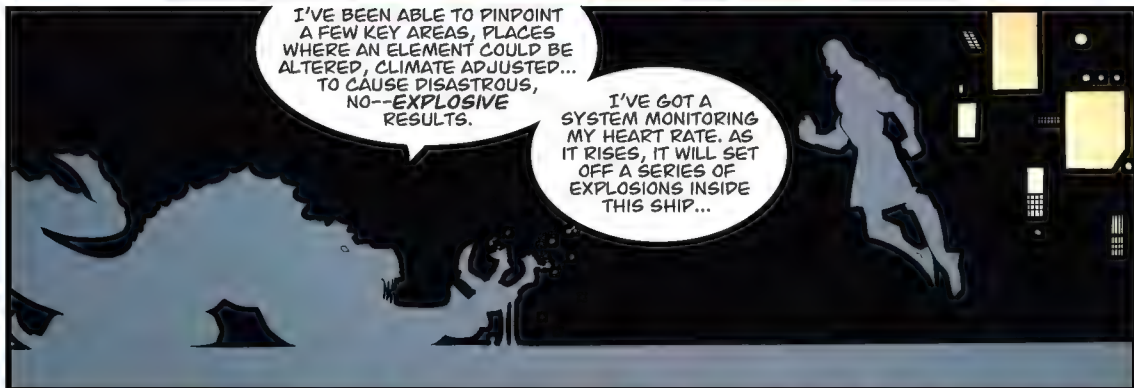
IT WAS
UNWISE TO GIVE
ME **COMPLETE**
ACCESS TO YOUR
FILES. I'VE
LEARNED A LOT
OVER THE LAST
FEW HOURS.

ENOUGH TO
KNOW YOU DON'T
WANT ANYTHING
BAD TO HAPPEN
TO THIS SHIP.



I'VE BEEN ABLE TO PINPOINT
A FEW KEY AREAS, PLACES
WHERE AN ELEMENT COULD BE
ALTERED, CLIMATE ADJUSTED...
TO CAUSE DISASTROUS,
NO--**EXPLOSIVE**
RESULTS.

I'VE GOT A
SYSTEM MONITORING
MY HEART RATE. AS
IT RISES, IT WILL SET
OFF A SERIES OF
EXPLOSIONS INSIDE
THIS SHIP...

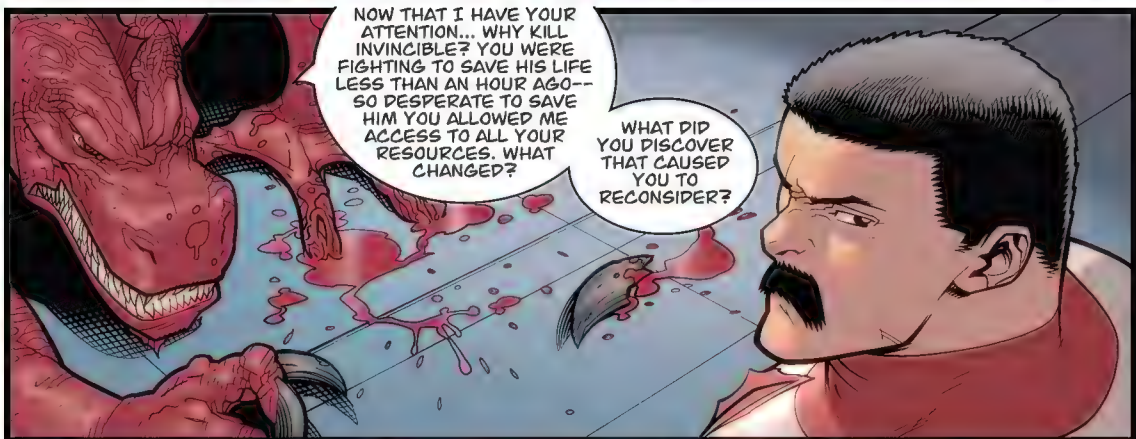


YOU
EXPECT
ME TO
BELIEVE--



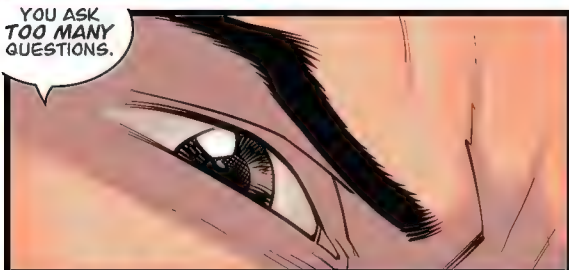
NOT AT ALL. IF MY
CALCULATIONS ARE
CORRECT, ONE
SHOULD BE GOING
OFF RIGHT...
ABOUT...



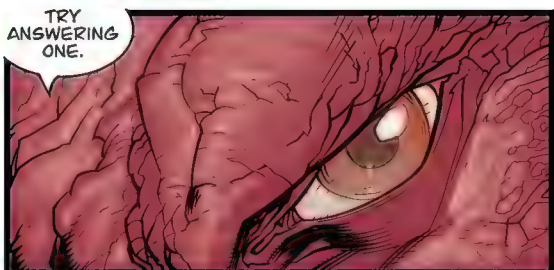


NOW THAT I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION... WHY KILL INVINCIBLE? YOU WERE FIGHTING TO SAVE HIS LIFE LESS THAN AN HOUR AGO-- SO DESPERATE TO SAVE HIM YOU ALLOWED ME ACCESS TO ALL YOUR RESOURCES. WHAT CHANGED?

WHAT DID YOU DISCOVER THAT CAUSED YOU TO RECONSIDER?



YOU ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS.

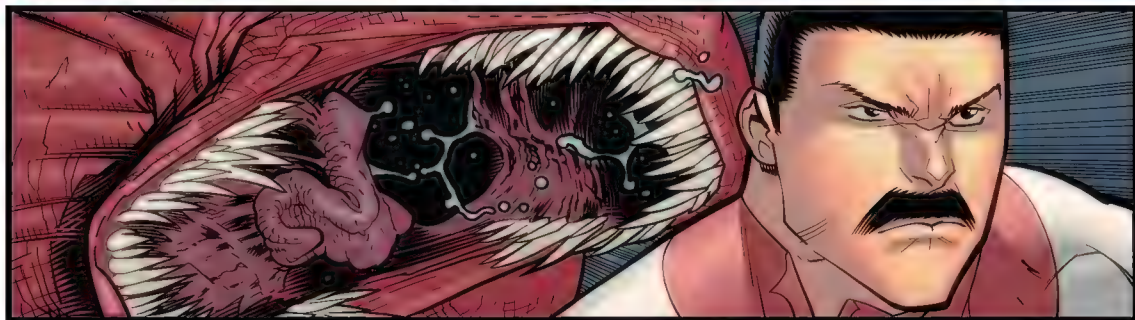
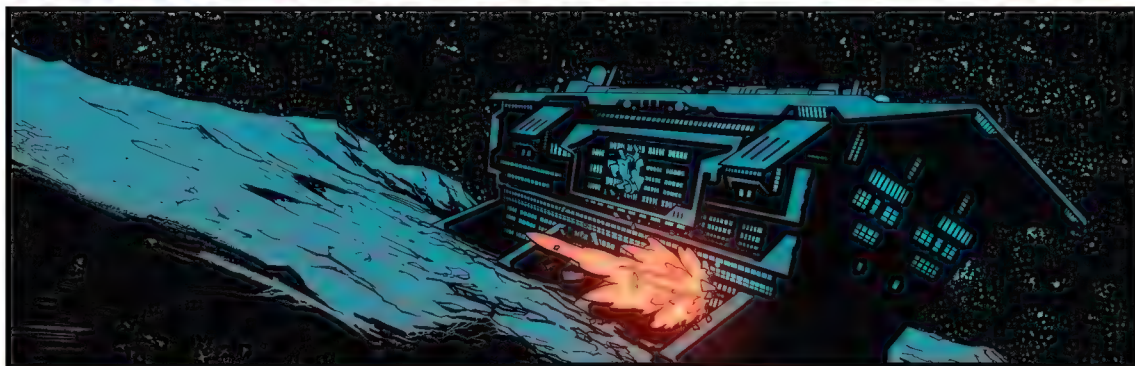
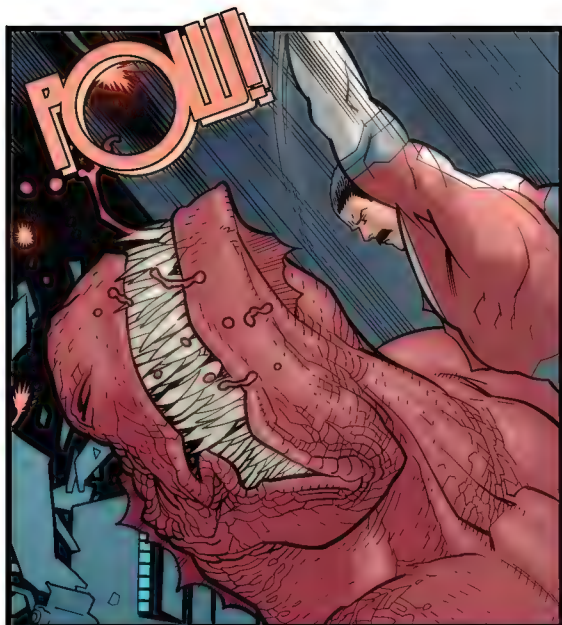


TRY ANSWERING ONE.



I'D RATHER DISCOVER IF YOU INSTALLED A FAILSAFE IF YOUR HEART STOPS.

YOU DON'T WANT--!





SKROOSH!



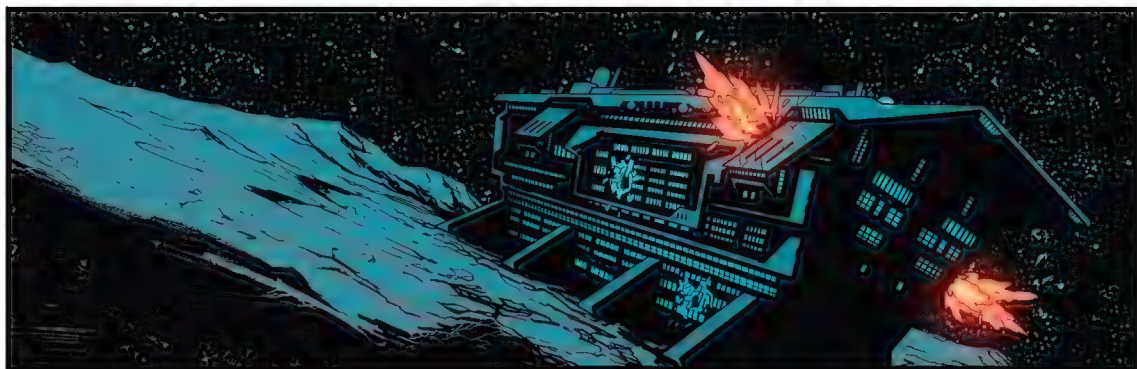
SURELY YOU EXPECTED THAT TO RESULT IN A FAR DIFFERENT OUTCOME.

EXPLOSHUN--
ONLY DA
BUGGINING...



I THINK I'VE HEARD ENOUGH FROM YOU.

KROKK!



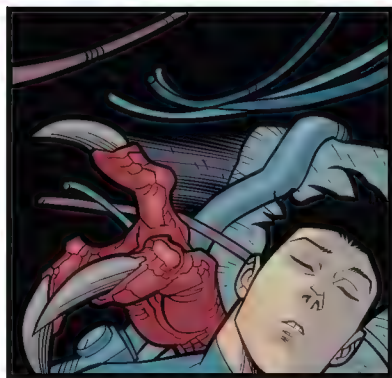
WHILE YOU'RE BUSY BLEEDING, I WILL ATTEND TO THIS. I SEE NOW THAT STOPPING YOUR HEART WOULD ONLY CAUSE MORE DAMAGE.

COLLECT YOURSELF. I'LL RETURN SHORTLY, YOU'LL WISH YOU WERE DEAD SOON ENOUGH.



KU--

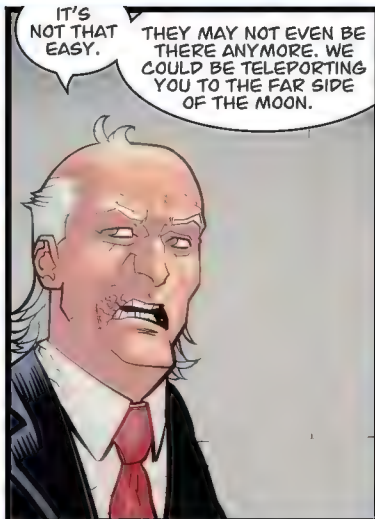
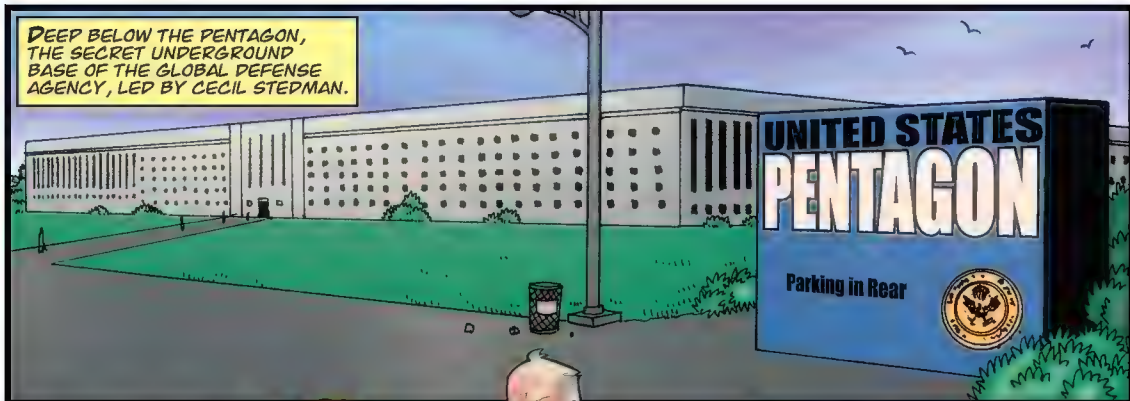
GU--



OW--

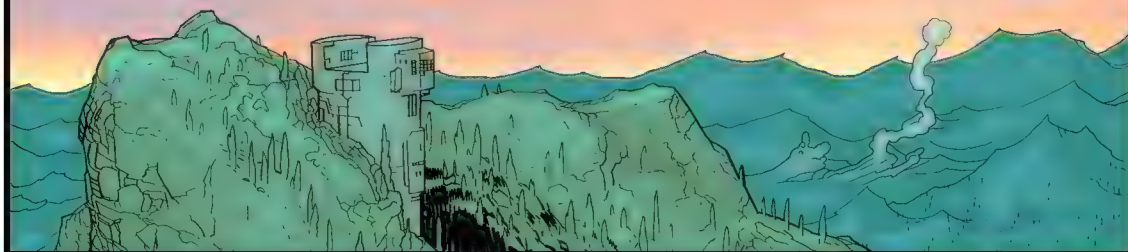
OUT.







UNDISCLOSED LOCATION, THE
SECRET BASE OF DINOSAURUS.





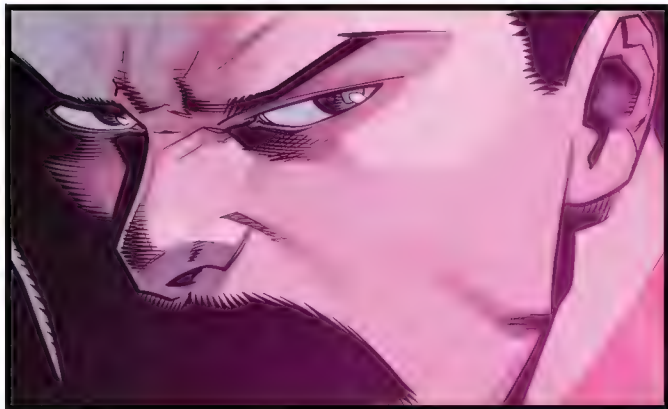
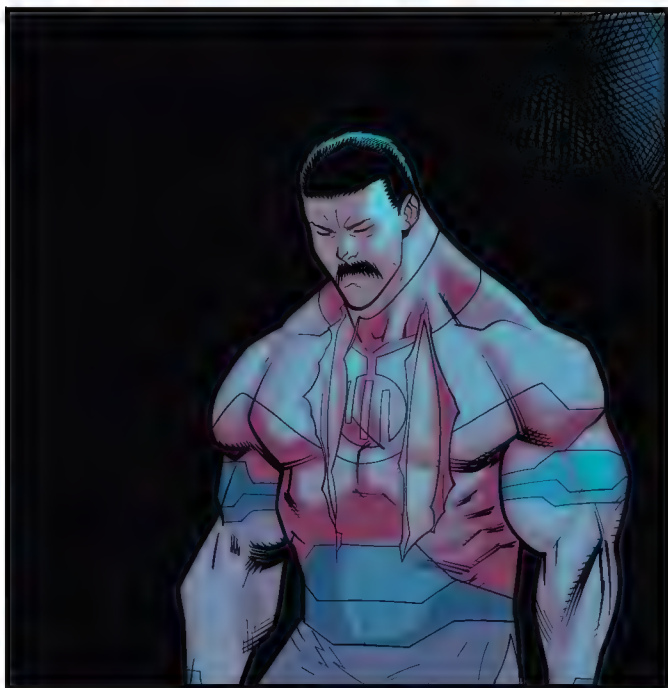
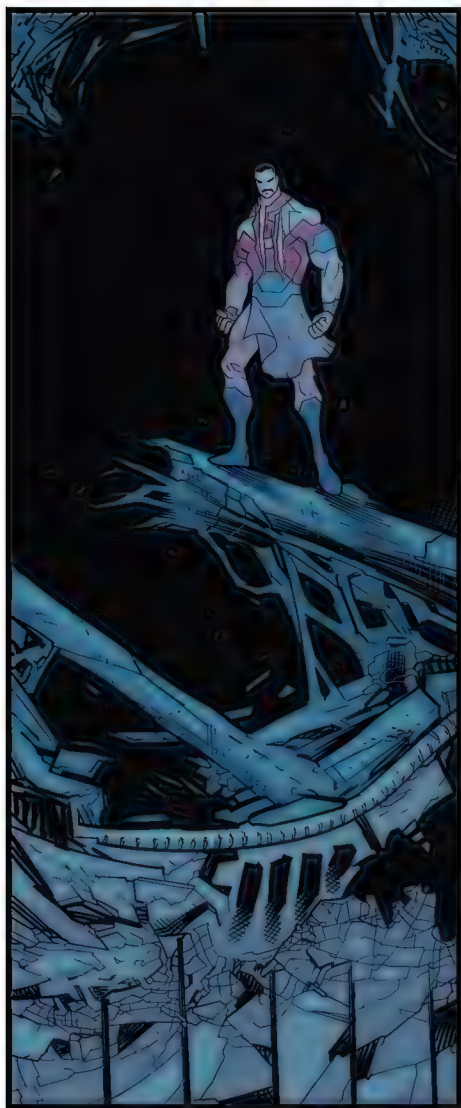
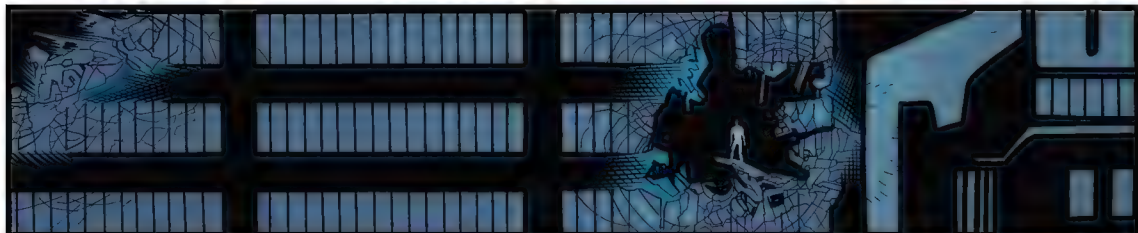
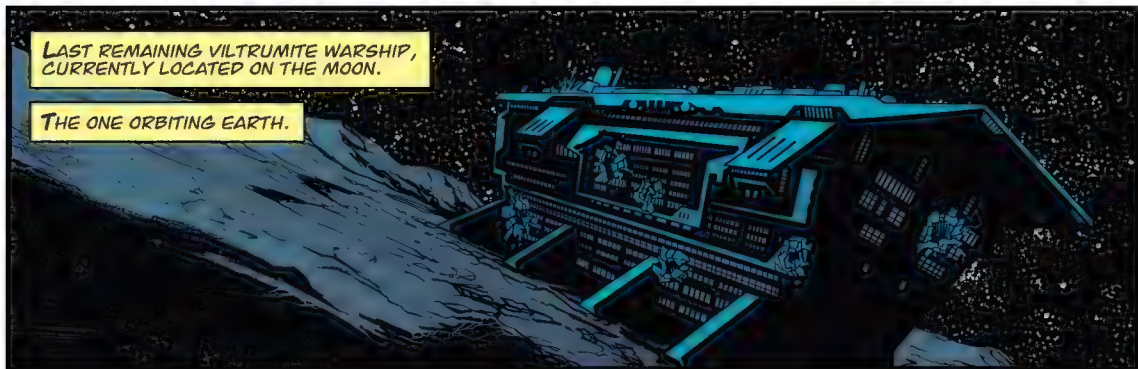


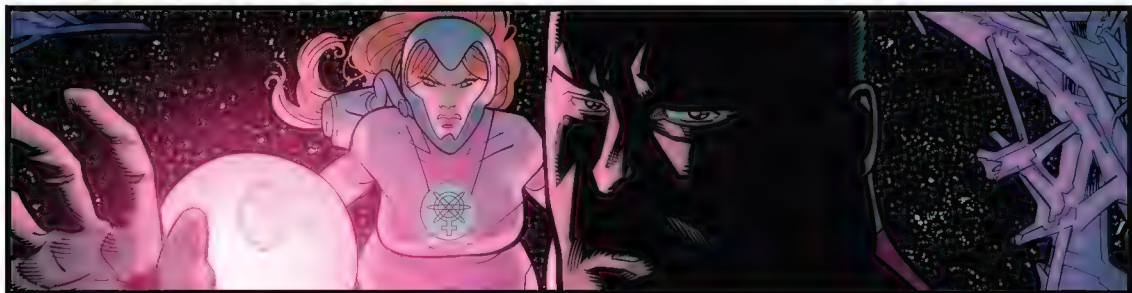
CHAPTER 91



LAST REMAINING VILTRUMITE WARSHIP,
CURRENTLY LOCATED ON THE MOON.

THE ONE ORBITING EARTH.







WHAT
HAPPENED?
WHERE IS
MARK?

IS HE
OKAY?

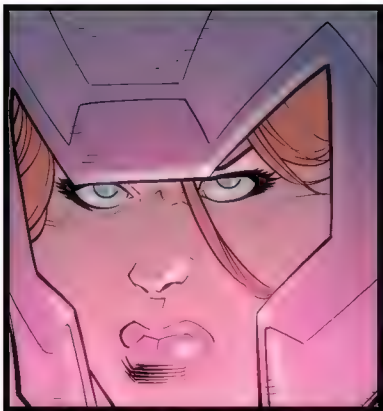
HE IS NO
LONGER
HERE.



WHAT
DOES THAT
MEAN?

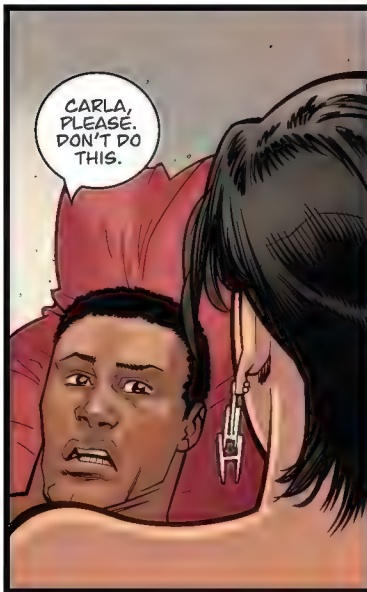
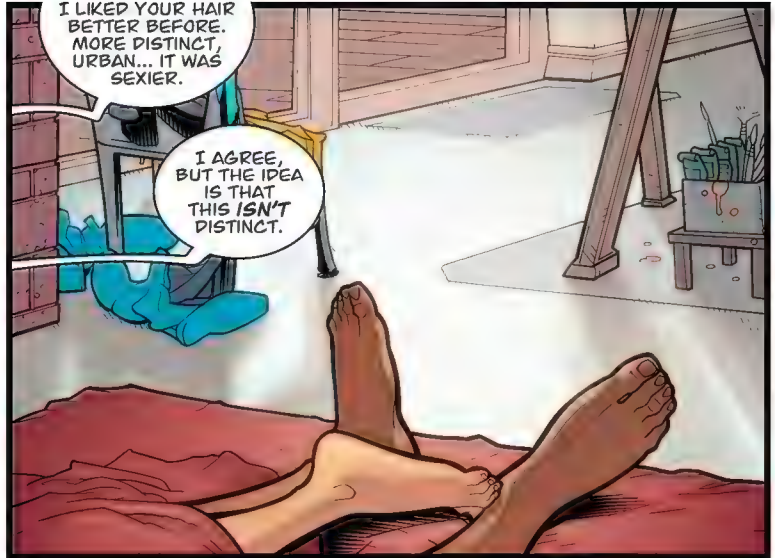


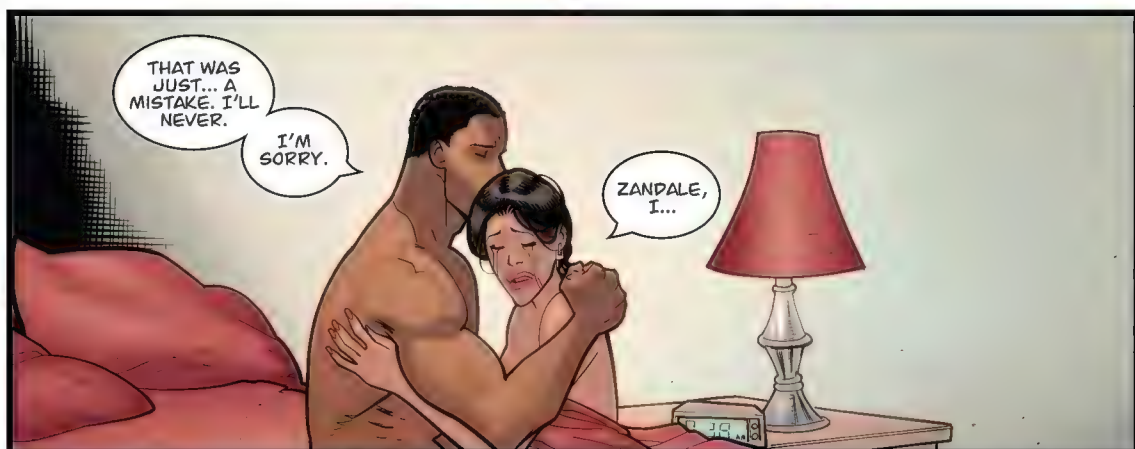
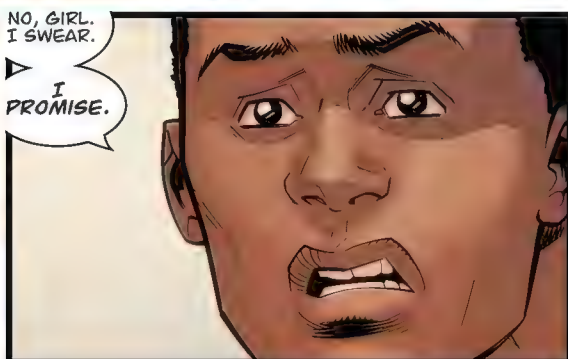
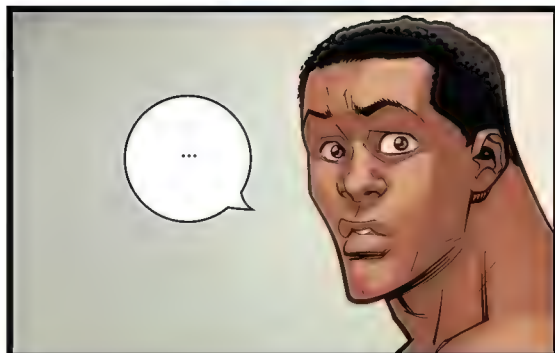
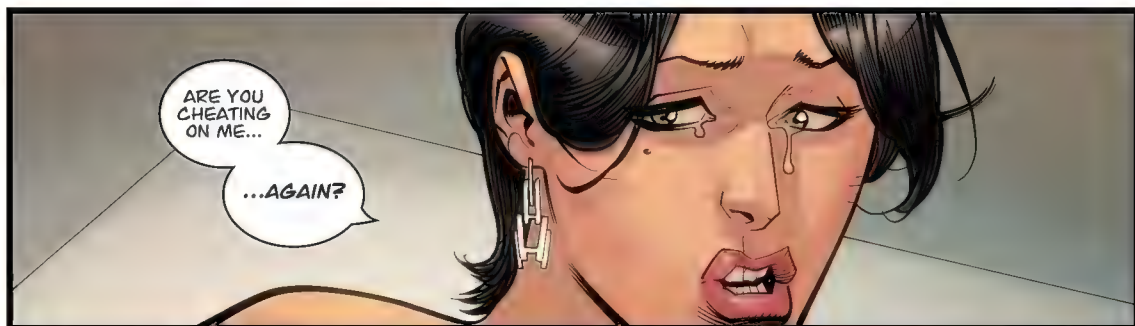
HA! HA! HA!
HA! HA!



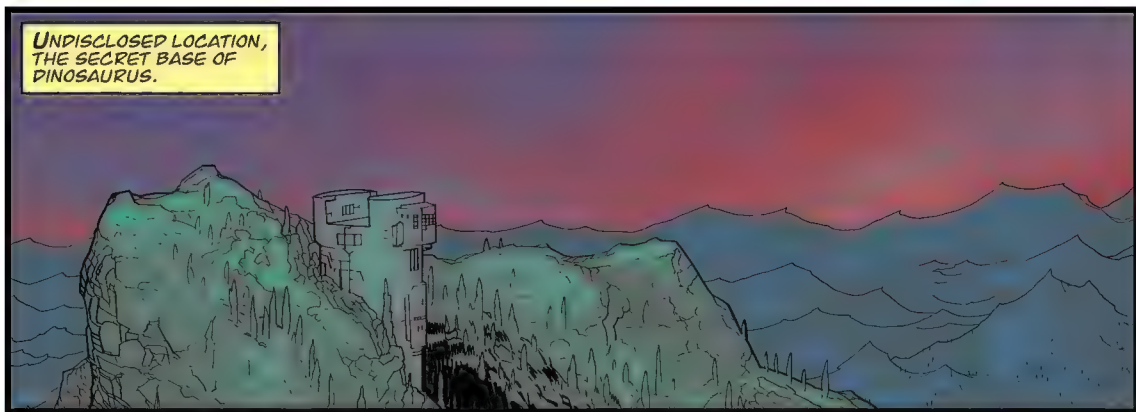
CALM DOWN BEFORE
YOU FIND YOURSELF
IMPALED ON A
CLENCHED FIST...
AGAIN.

WE WERE
ATTACKED, HE
WAS TAKEN.
DIRECT YOUR ANGER
TO YOUR MATE'S
MONSTROUS
COLLEAGUE THAT
OFFERED TO
HELP HIM.





UNDISCLOSED LOCATION,
THE SECRET BASE OF
DINOSAURUS.



LIKE... WHAT
HAPPENED?



I DON'T
KNOW, I THOUGHT
YOU DIED... I
WOKE UP IN A PILE OF
WRECKAGE, YOU WERE
IN YOUR DINOSAURUS
FORM--BUT YOU WERE
ALL BEATEN UP...
REALLY BAD.

YOU
GRUNTED AT
ME, I COULDN'T
MAKE ANYTHING
OUT--THEN YOU
PASSED OUT, AND
TURNED.

I HAVE
NO IDEA WHY
WE'RE HERE,
OR WHAT
HAPPENED.

AM I DOING
BAD STUFF
AGAIN? DID
YOU STOP
ME?



NO, YOU
WEREN'T DOING
ANYTHING BAD.
I THINK THAT'S
BEHIND YOU... I'M
HELPING YOU
ACCOMPLISH
GOOD
THINGS.

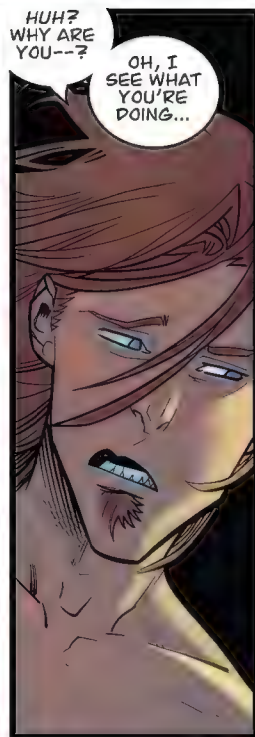
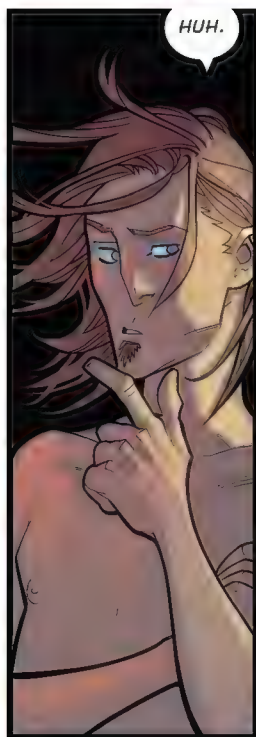
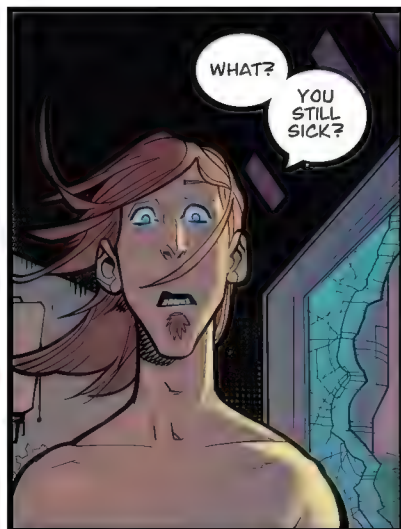
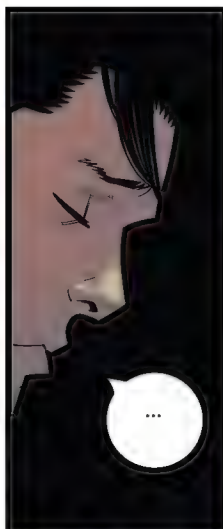
A LOT
OF GOOD
THINGS... AT
LEAST I WAS,
UNTIL I GOT
SICK.



DID I MAKE
YOU SICK?
MAYBE I
TRICKED YOU,
BRO.



WHEN I'M
THE MONSTER,
I'M PURE EVIL--
THAT'S WHY I
LOOK LIKE THAT.
YOU GOTTA
WATCH OUT,
MAN.







ANY CLUE HOW TO BEAT THIS THING? I CAN'T TELL WHAT PARTS ARE HIM AND WHAT PARTS ARE HIS SUIT!

THIS IS A SUIT, RIGHT?!

I'VE NEVER FOUGHT ANYTHING LIKE THIS GUY BEFORE-- BUT IT APPEARS TO BE SOME KIND OF SYMBIOTIC ORGANISM.

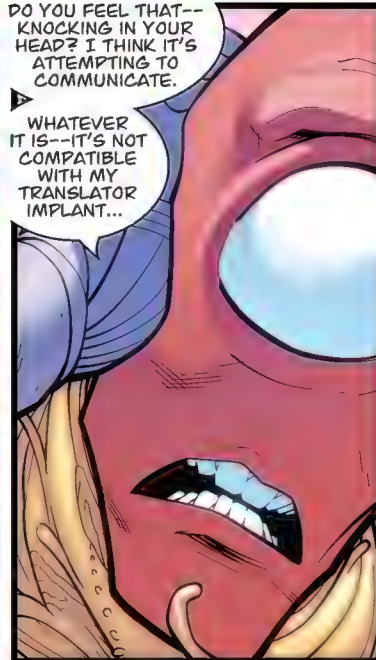


WZAP!
WZAP!

I CAN'T REALLY TELL WHO'S IN CONTROL.

DO YOU FEEL THAT-- KNOCKING IN YOUR HEAD? I THINK IT'S ATTEMPTING TO COMMUNICATE.

▶ WHATEVER IT IS--IT'S NOT COMPATIBLE WITH MY TRANSLATOR IMPLANT...



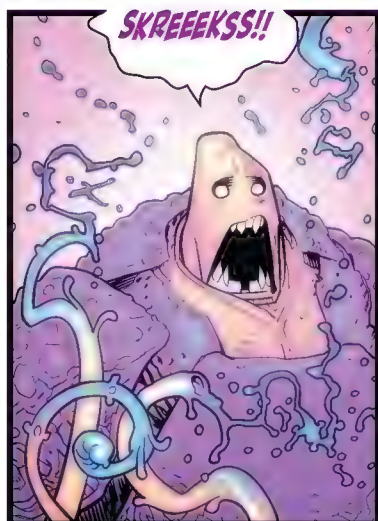
CRAP! THIS THING IS MELTING MY TECH JACKET-- IT'S GETTING INSIDE!

HIT IT!
HIT IT!
HIT IT!



I AM!







NO SWEAT. I'M HAPPY TO
HELP OUT--DOESN'T SEEM
LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE
ABLE TO BREAK FREE OF
MY CONSTRUCT.

I DIDN'T
COME HERE
TO HELP
THOUGH--
IT'S MARK--
HE'S--



OH,
GOD--
IS
HE--?!



HE'S ALIVE...
HE'S GOT TO
BE... BUT I
DON'T KNOW
WHERE
HE IS.

ALTHOUGH,
YOU DO.



WHAT?!
HE'S ON THE
VILTRUMITE
SHIP...

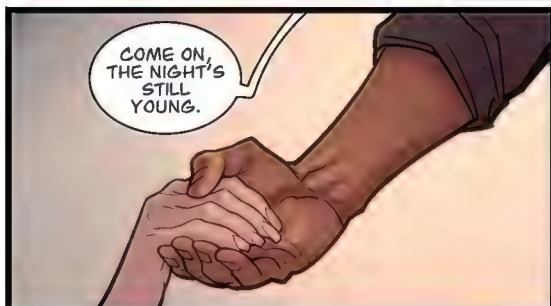
...ISN'T
HE?

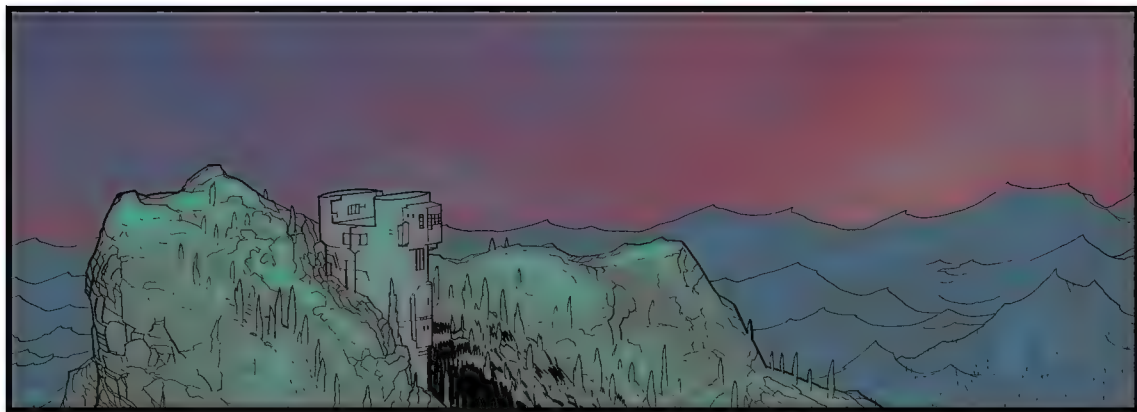


DINOSAURUS HAS
HIM--AND I NEED
YOUR HELP IF
WE'RE GOING
TO GET HIM
BACK.

I CAN TAKE
YOU TO THE PLACE
MARK DIRECTED
ME TO BEFORE...
DINOSAURUS
PROBABLY TOOK
HIM THERE,
RIGHT?

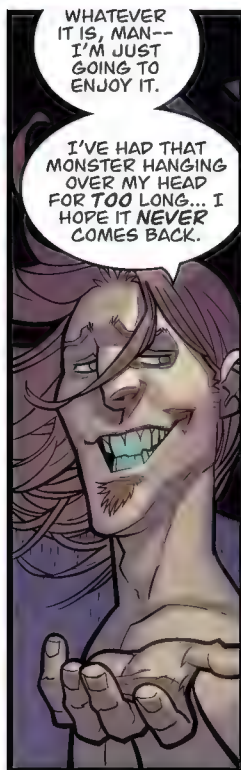
RIGHT,
WE'LL NEED
TO DROP THIS
GUY OFF AT
STRONGHOLD
PENITENTIARY FOR
PROCESSING
FIRST,
THOUGH.





I DON'T UNDERSTAND, IT'S JUST NOT WORKING. MAYBE IF I WAS BEATEN UP AS BADLY AS YOU SAY... THAT PART OF ME IS, LIKE... DEAD AND STUFF.

THAT CAN'T BE IT... MAYBE YOU'RE HEALING, I DON'T KNOW HOW YOUR TRANSFORMATION WORKS... IT COULD JUST BE "OFF" RIGHT NOW.



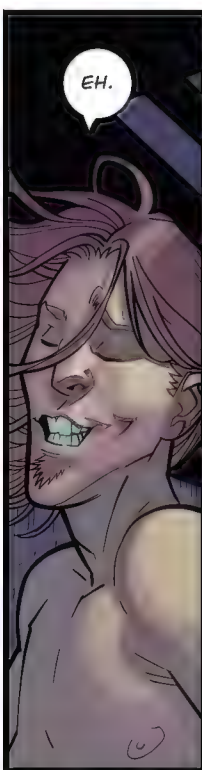
WHATEVER IT IS, MAN-- I'M JUST GOING TO ENJOY IT.

I'VE HAD THAT MONSTER HANGING OVER MY HEAD FOR TOO LONG... I HOPE IT NEVER COMES BACK.

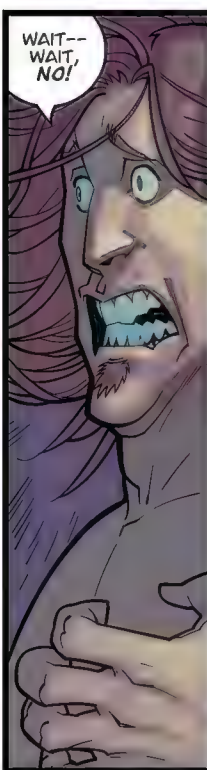


THAT WOULDN'T BE SO GREAT FOR ME. I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M HERE, OR WHY THIS BASE IS TRASHED.

FRANKLY, WHATEVER DID THIS COULD BE COMING BACK. OUR LIVES COULD BE IN DANGER.



EH.



WAIT-- WAIT, NO!



FINALLY.



YOU'RE
LOOKING
MUCH
BETTER.

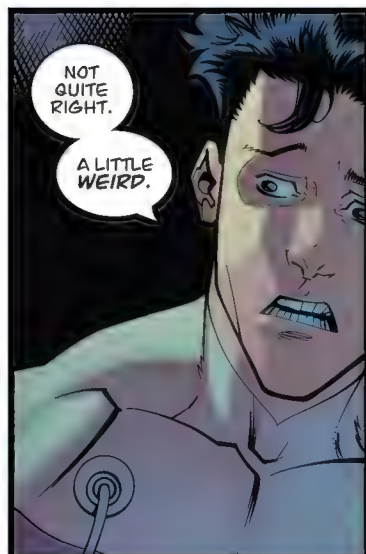
MY FORM
IS BUILT ANEW
EACH TIME I
TRANSFORM--
ARE THEY HERE?!
HAVE THEY
STRUCK?!

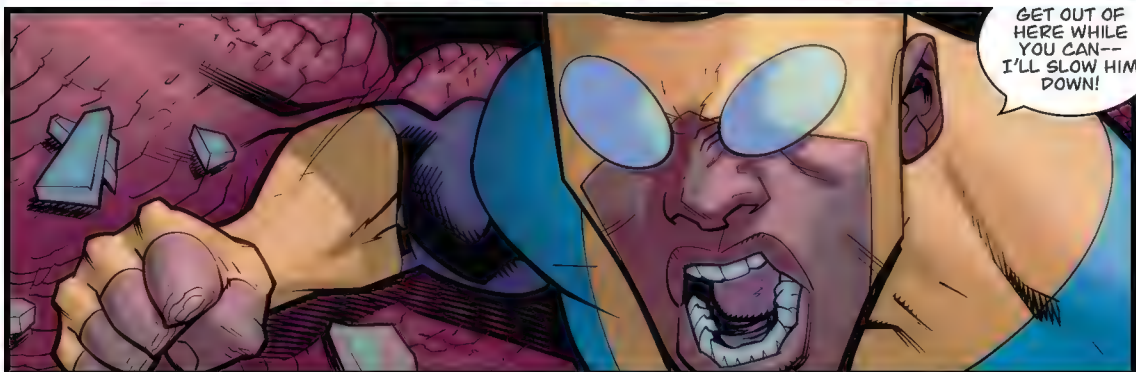
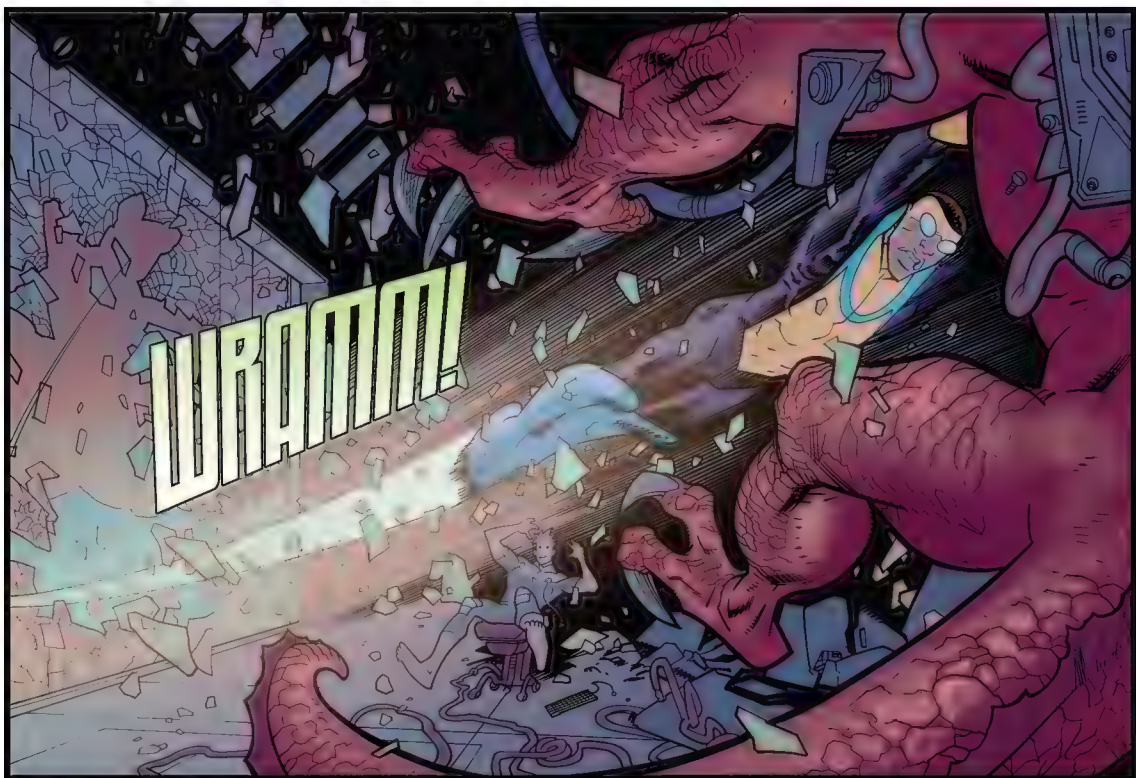
WHAT
KIND
OF TIME
DO WE
HAVE?!

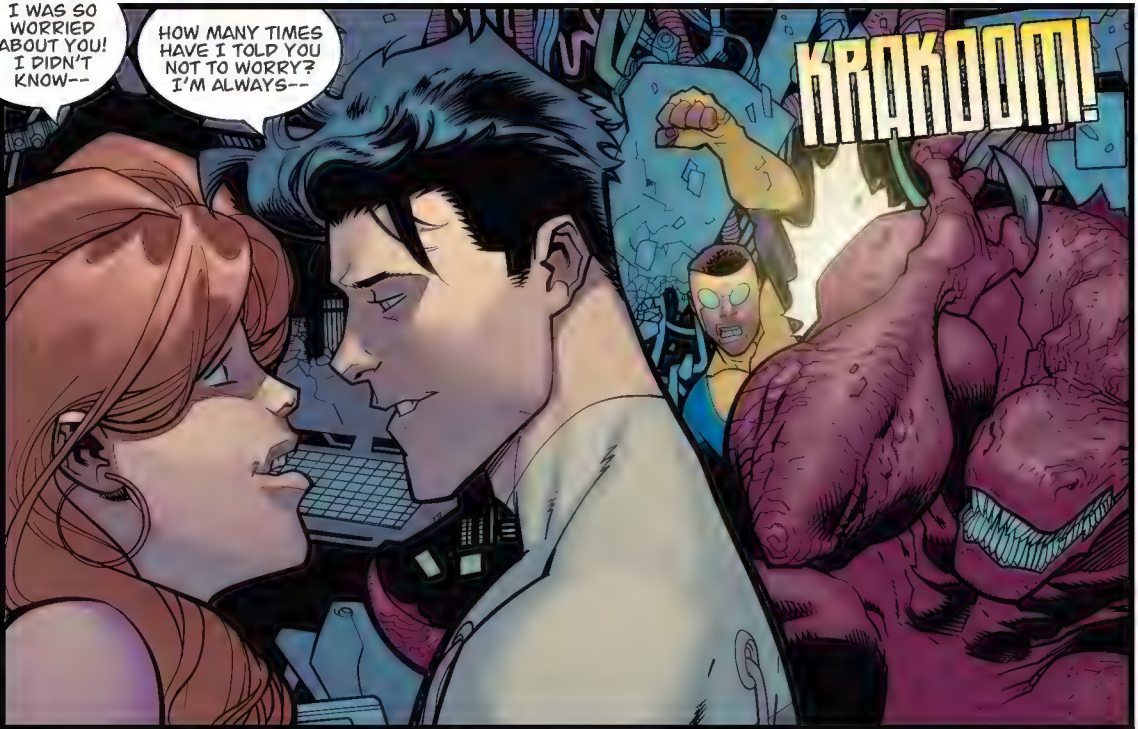
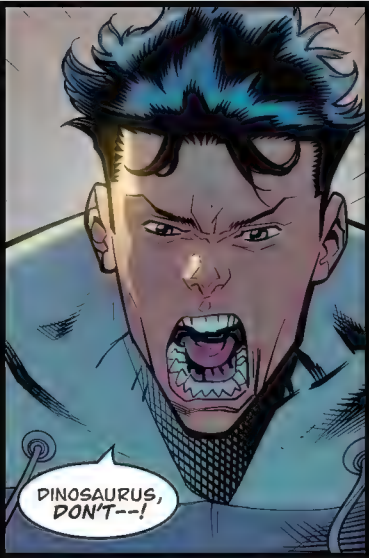
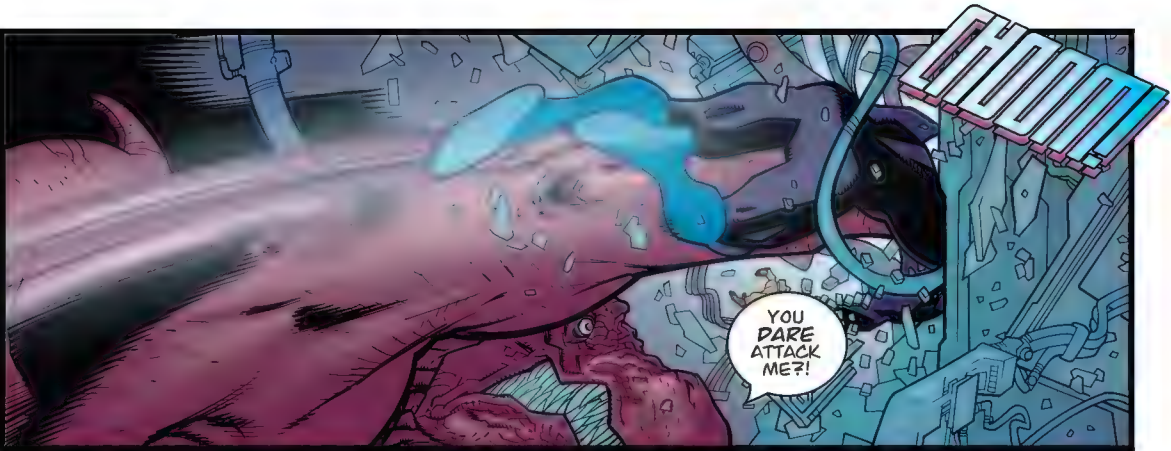


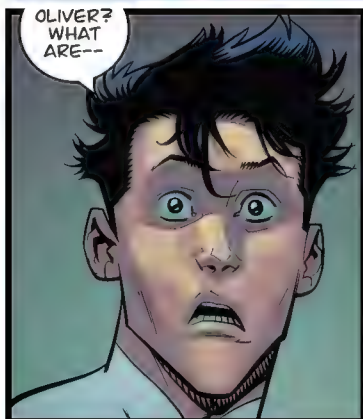
I HAVE
NO IDEA
WHAT YOU'RE
TALKING
ABOUT!

THE
VILTRUMITES--
THEY TRIED TO KILL
YOU! I ESCAPED,
RETREATED HERE--
BUT SURELY THEY
FOLLOWED US! THEY
COULD ATTACK AT
ANY MOMENT!









THE VILTRUMITES
SEND **LESSER**
AGENTS TO
CONFRONT
ME?!

I FIND
THIS ASSAULT
FROM MERE
MINIONS AN
INSULT!

WAIT!

WILL EVERYONE
JUST **CALM DOWN?**
THIS WASN'T AN
ATTACK--AND
DINOSAURUS IS ON
OUR SIDE!

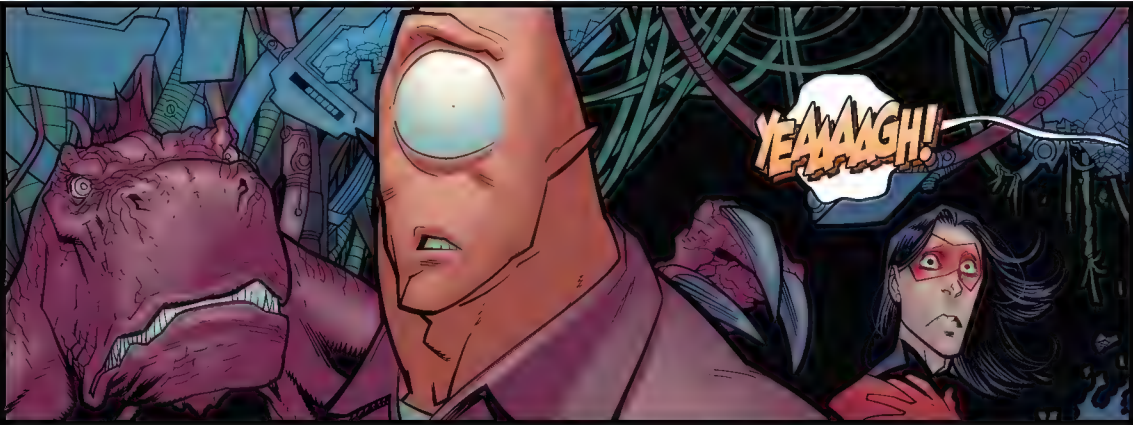
PUT OLIVER
DOWN, HE'S
MY **BROTHER**
I CAN EXPLAIN
ALL THIS--!

KROOM!

YOU
HEARD
HIM, LET
THE BOY
GO!!

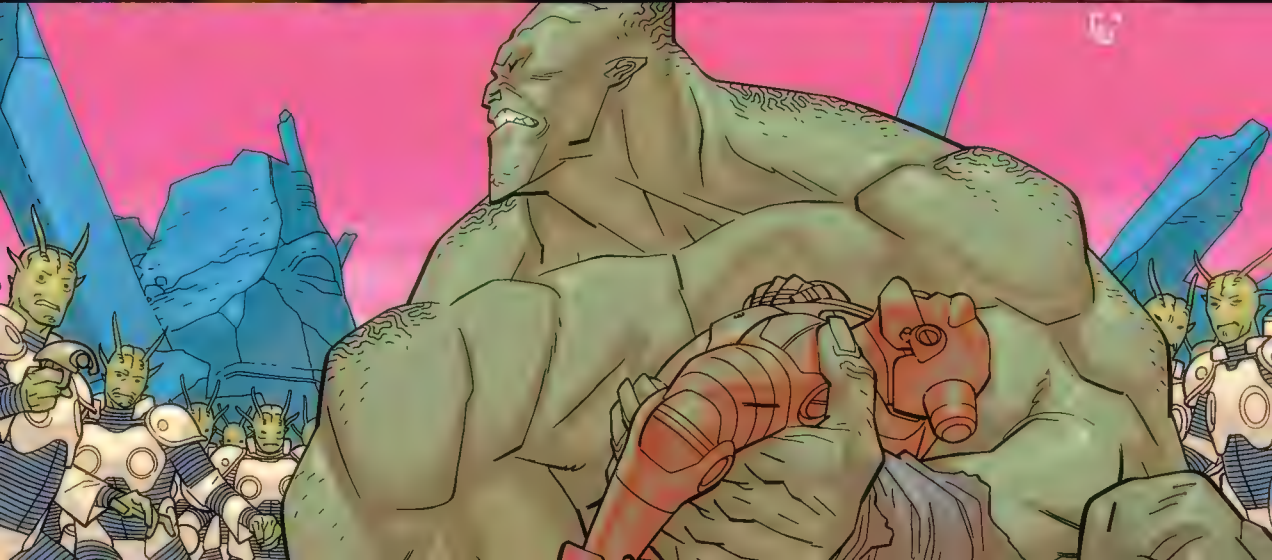
YOU
CAN'T--

DAMN IT--
STOP!!





CHAPTER 92



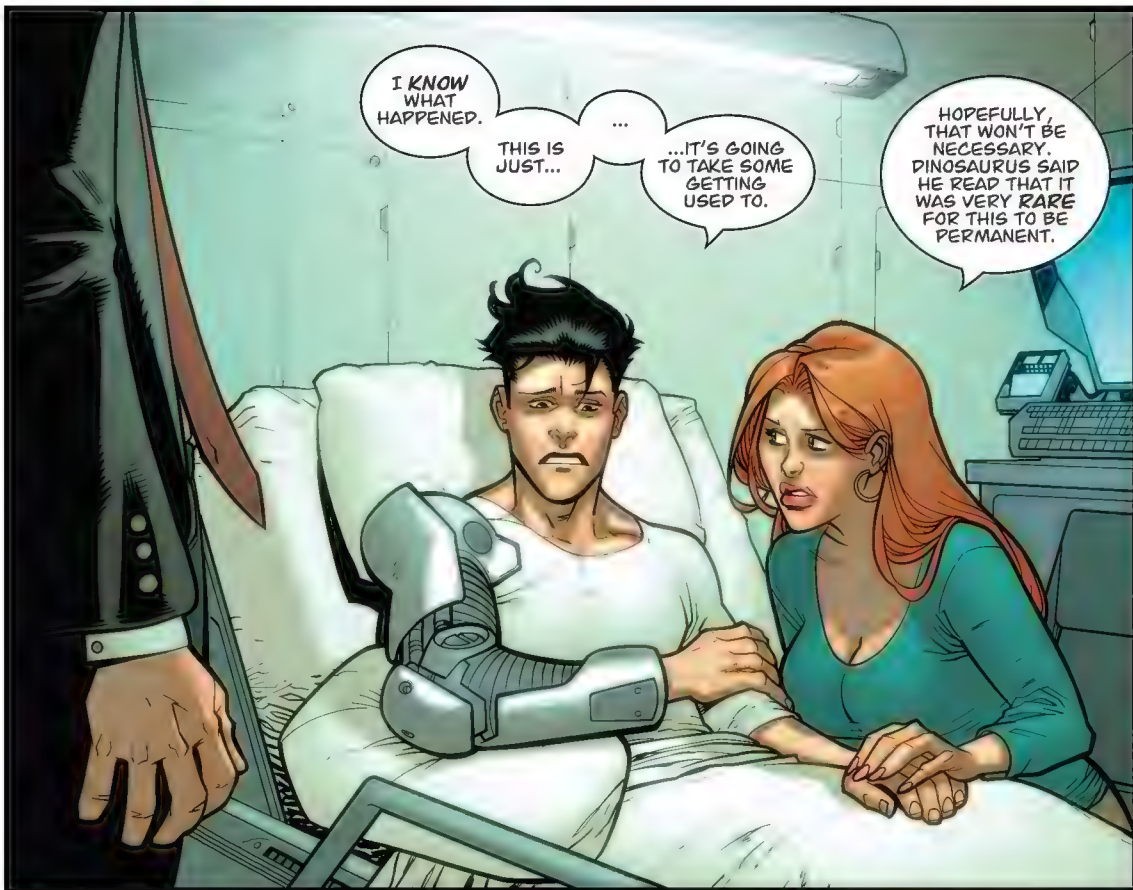


IT TOOK ELEVEN DIFFERENT SURGERIES TO RECONSTRUCT YOUR ARM SO THAT IT CAN HEAL PROPERLY.

THE SCOURGE VIRUS, AS IT'S BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME, SOMETIMES LEAVES SURVIVORS IN A PERIOD WHERE THEIR VILTRUMITE ABILITIES ARE SUSPENDED FOR A VARIABLE AMOUNT OF TIME--SOMETIMES PERMANENTLY.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT YOUR ABILITIES HAVEN'T LEFT YOU ALL AT ONCE... YOUR SUPER STRENGTH WAS STILL INTACT, YOUR INVULNERABILITY GREATLY DIMINISHED.

SO WHEN YOU HIT ALLEN--



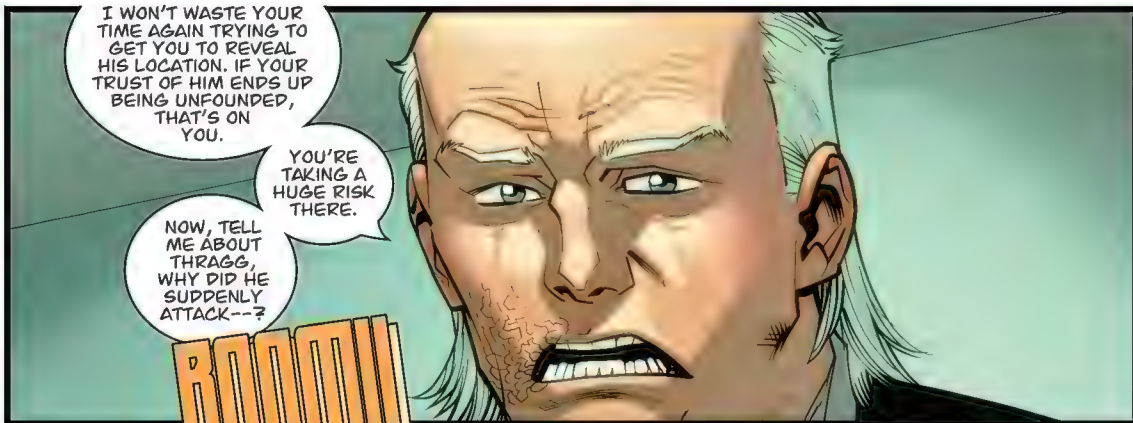
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

THIS IS JUST...

...

...IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO.

HOPEFULLY, THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. DINOSAURUS SAID HE READ THAT IT WAS VERY RARE FOR THIS TO BE PERMANENT.

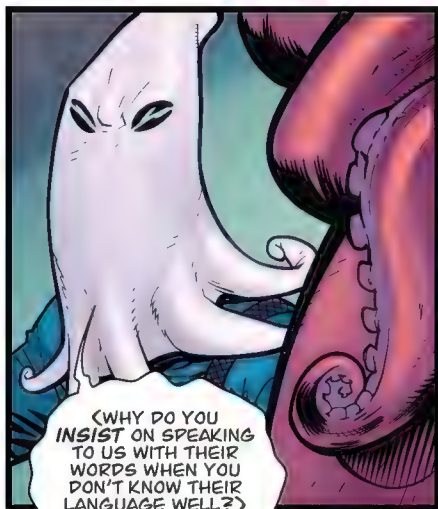


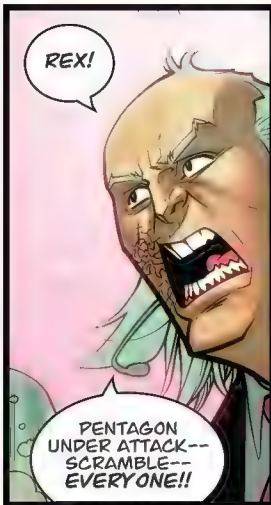
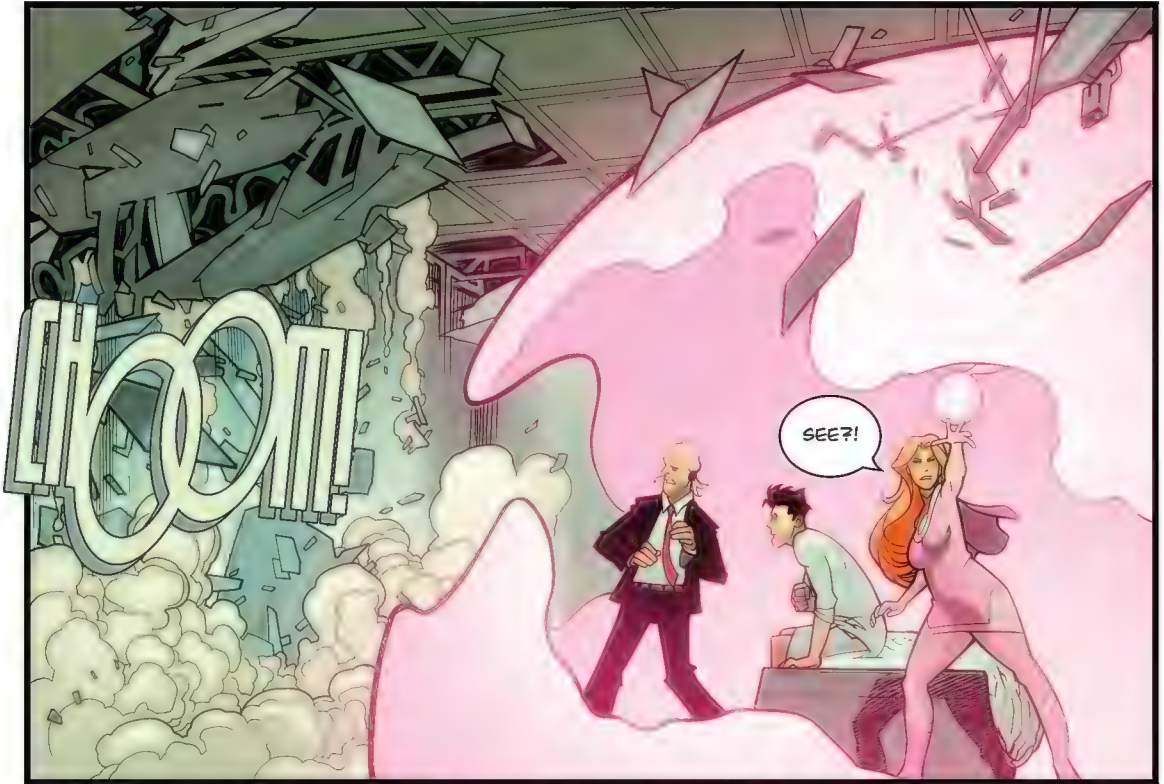
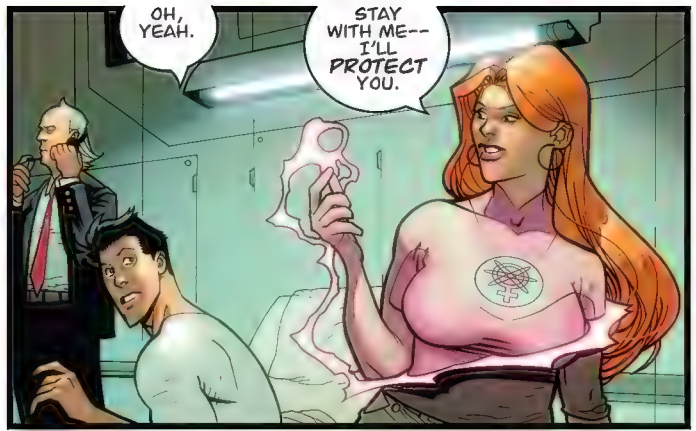
I WON'T WASTE YOUR TIME AGAIN TRYING TO GET YOU TO REVEAL HIS LOCATION. IF YOUR TRUST OF HIM ENDS UP BEING UNFOUNDED, THAT'S ON YOU.

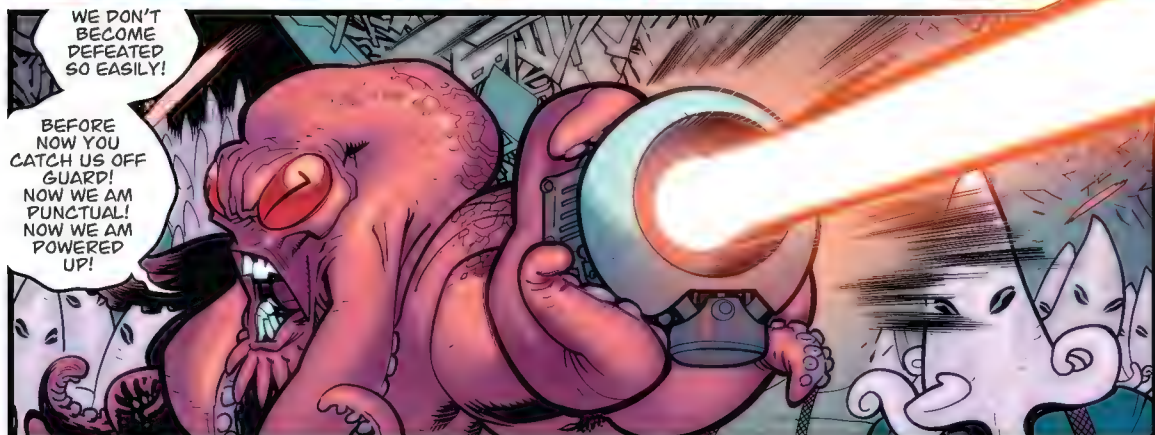
YOU'RE TAKING A HUGE RISK THERE.

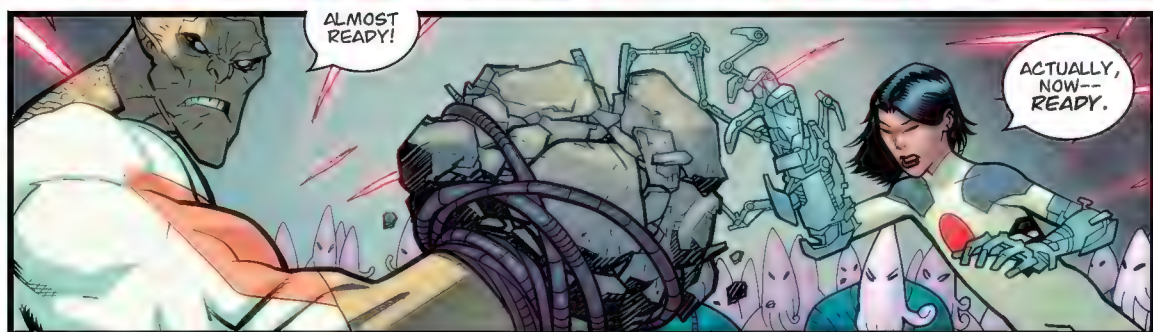
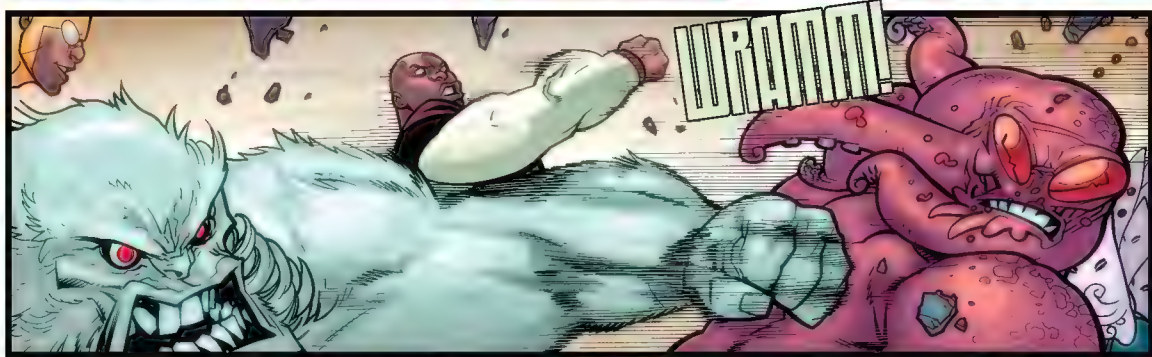
NOW, TELL ME ABOUT THRAGG, WHY DID HE SUDDENLY ATTACK--?

BOOM!!!









COMING
AT YOU!

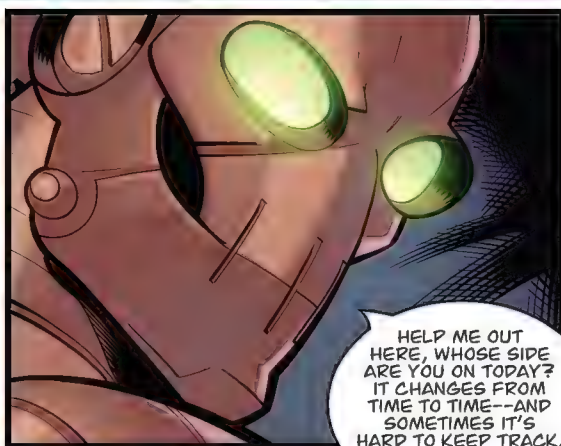
WIRAKOOM!!!

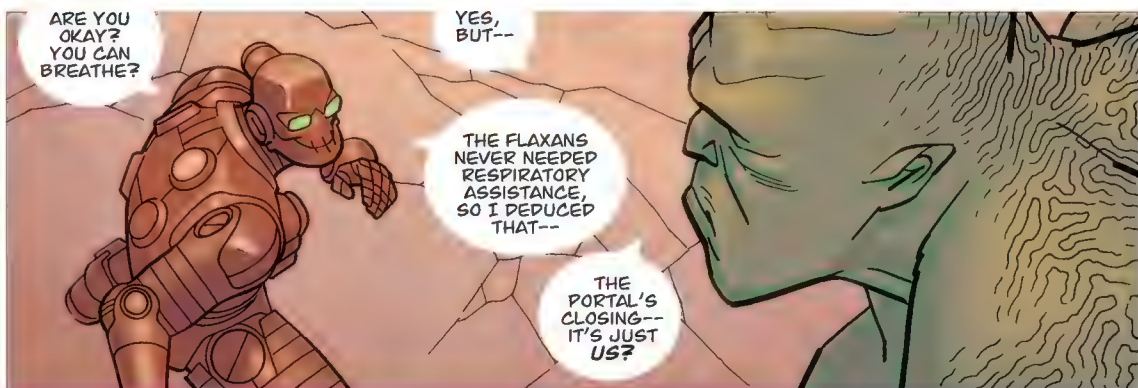
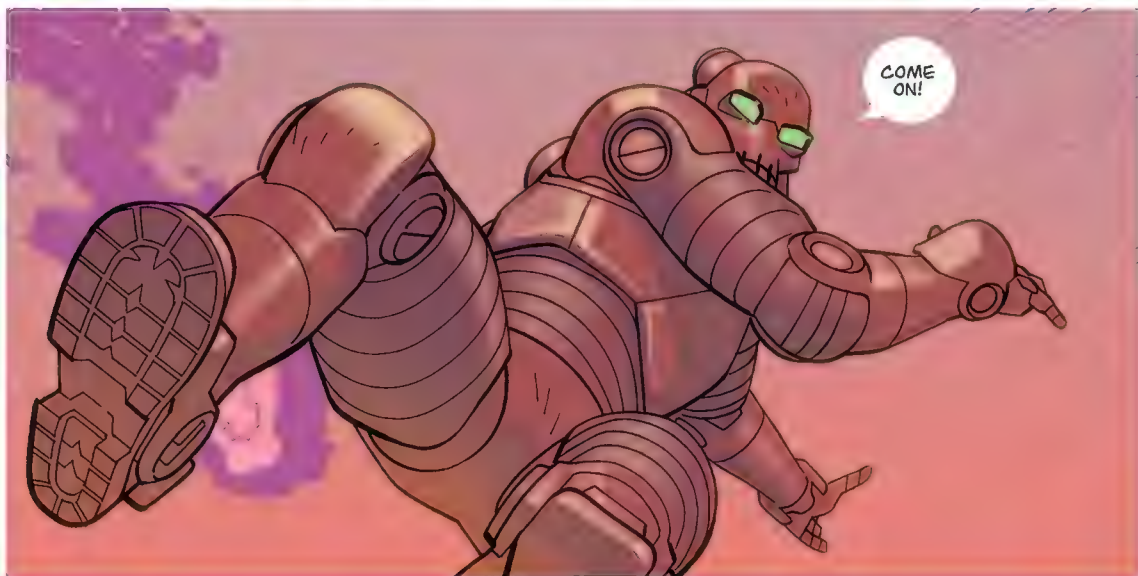
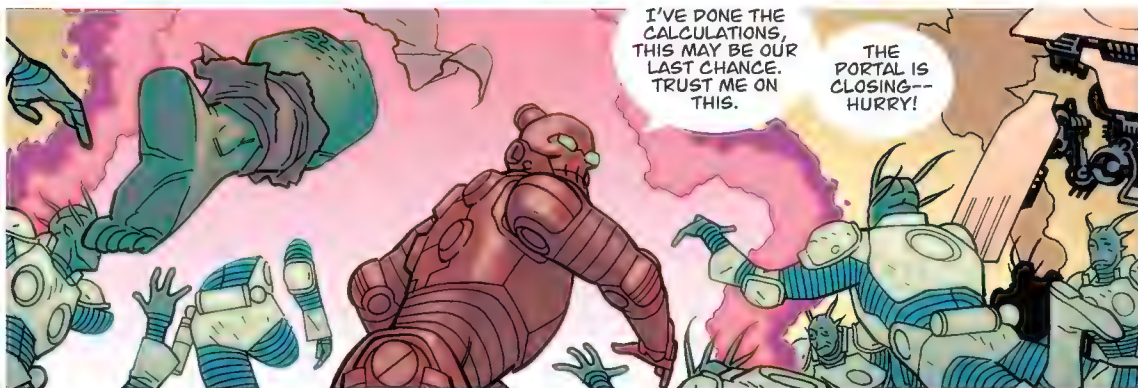


CAPES AND
WOLF C.O.R.P.S.
STAND DOWN.
THE THREAT
HAS BEEN
NEUTRALIZED.

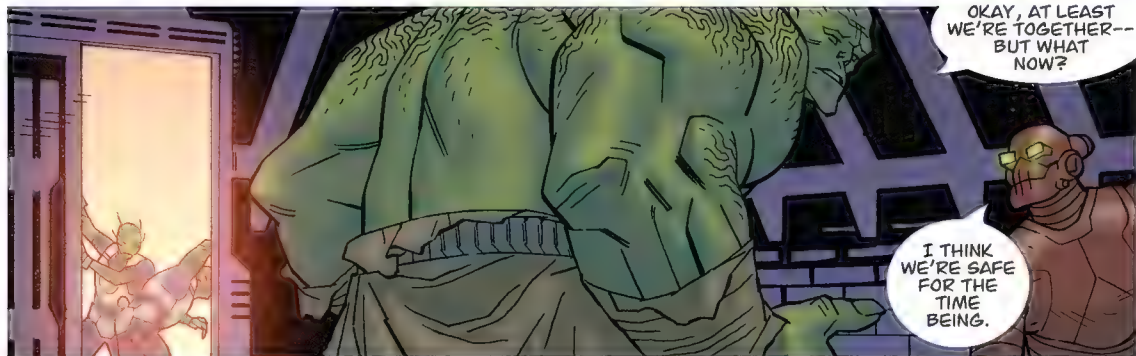
DON'T THINK
WE EVEN
NEEDED THE FULL
GUARDIANS
ROSTER...
NICE.





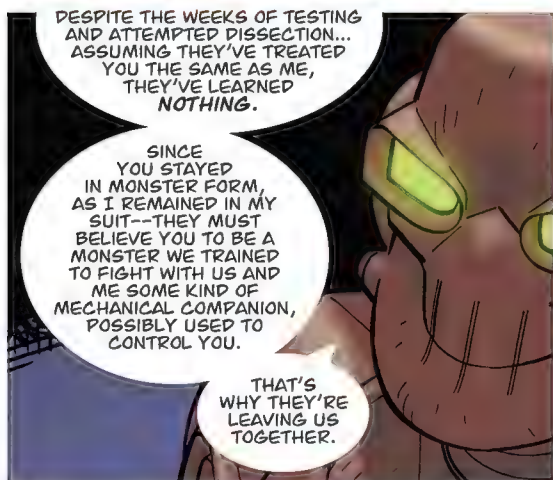






OKAY, AT LEAST
WE'RE TOGETHER--
BUT WHAT
NOW?

I THINK
WE'RE SAFE
FOR THE
TIME
BEING.



DESPITE THE WEEKS OF TESTING
AND ATTEMPTED DISSECTION...
ASSUMING THEY'VE TREATED
YOU THE SAME AS ME,
THEY'VE LEARNED
NOTHING.

SINCE
YOU STAYED
IN MONSTER FORM,
AS I REMAINED IN MY
SUIT--THEY MUST
BELIEVE YOU TO BE A
MONSTER WE TRAINED
TO FIGHT WITH US AND
ME SOME KIND OF
MECHANICAL COMPANION,
POSSIBLY USED TO
CONTROL YOU.

THAT'S
WHY THEY'RE
LEAVING US
TOGETHER.



I'VE BEEN MONITORING RADIO
TRANSMISSIONS AND IT
SHOULDN'T TAKE ME MORE THAN
ANOTHER MONTH TO LEARN
THEIR LANGUAGE.

HOPEFULLY, WE
WON'T BE HERE
THAT LONG. I'M
SCANNING FOR
MONITORING DEVICES.
IF I DETECT NONE, YOU
CAN REVERT TO HUMAN
FORM AND WE CAN
START LOOKING FOR
WEAKNESSES IN
THIS CELL.

I THINK TAKING
DOWN THE FLAXANS
IS NO LONGER AN
OPTION--FINDING OUR
WAY BACK TO OUR
DIMENSION IS OUR
NEW MISSION.

IT'S BEEN DAYS SINCE YOU'VE EATEN. JUST TRY IT... IT'S NOT SO BAD.

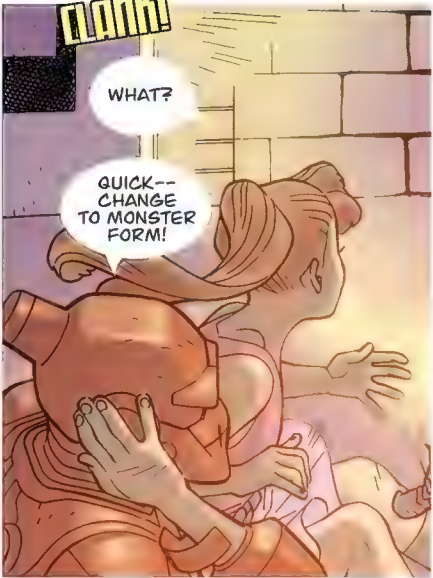
THE SMELL, OH, GOD--THEY SMELL WORSE THAN THEY LOOK!



CLUNK!

WHAT?

QUICK-- CHANGE TO MONSTER FORM!



CRAP! WHAT ARE THEY--



ᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨ
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ᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨ



SLAM!

ᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨ
ᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨ
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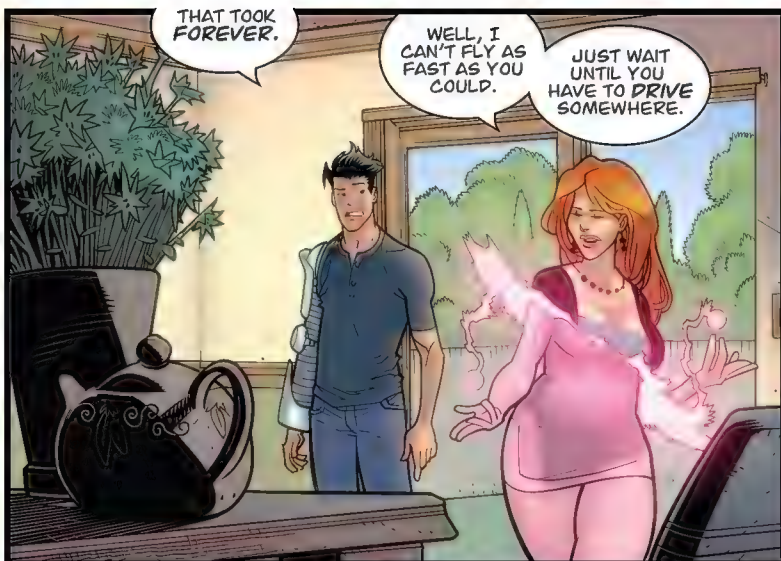
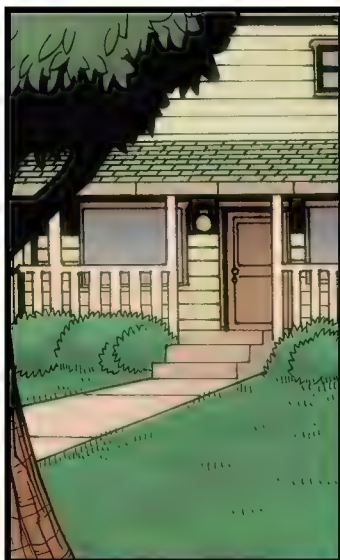
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WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM?

WELL, I'M ONLY UNDERSTANDING PART OF WHAT HE'S SAYING-- BUT IT APPEARS HE EXPECTS YOU TO TRY AND EAT HIM.

I THINK THEY WERE FEEDING HIM TO YOU.





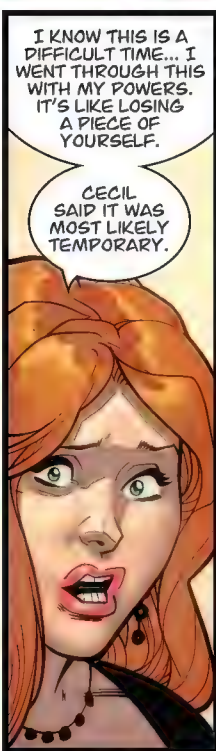
THAT TOOK FOREVER.

WELL, I CAN'T FLY AS FAST AS YOU COULD.

JUST WAIT UNTIL YOU HAVE TO DRIVE SOMEWHERE.



MY GOD... I FELT SO... HELPLESS TODAY.



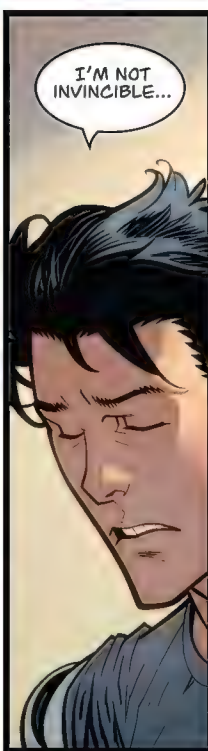
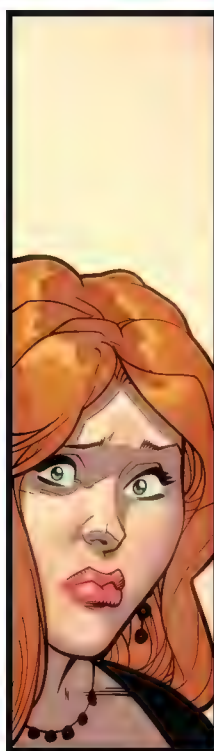
I KNOW THIS IS A DIFFICULT TIME... I WENT THROUGH THIS WITH MY POWERS. IT'S LIKE LOSING A PIECE OF YOURSELF.

CECIL SAID IT WAS MOST LIKELY TEMPORARY.



"MOST LIKELY."

THERE'S A CHANCE THIS COULD BE PERMANENT.



I'M NOT INVINCIBLE...

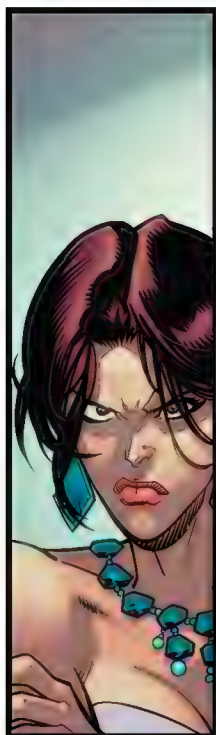


...AND I MAY NEVER BE INVINCIBLE AGAIN.

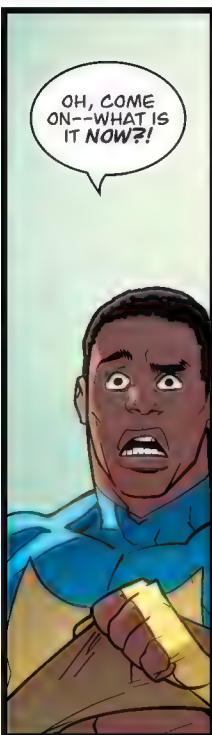


SORRY, SORRY. WE TOOK THE GUY OUT PRETTY QUICKLY, BUT WE ALL HAD TO HANG AROUND AND SUPERVISE THEM BEING TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.

Y'KNOW... TO MAKE SURE HE DIDN'T BREAK FREE AND KILL A BUNCH OF PEOPLE... IT'S IMPORTANT STUFF.

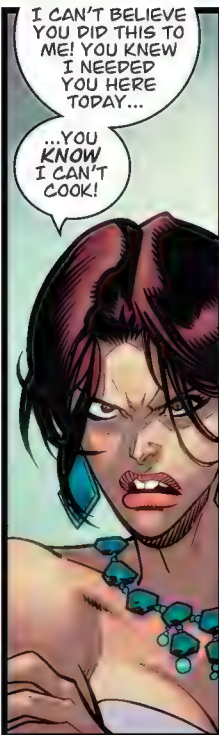


OH, COME ON--WHAT IS IT NOW?!



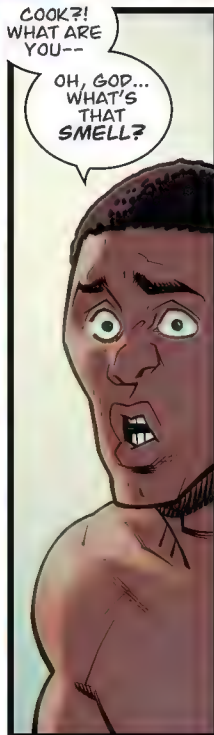
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THIS TO ME! YOU KNEW I NEEDED YOU HERE TODAY...

...YOU KNOW I CAN'T COOK!



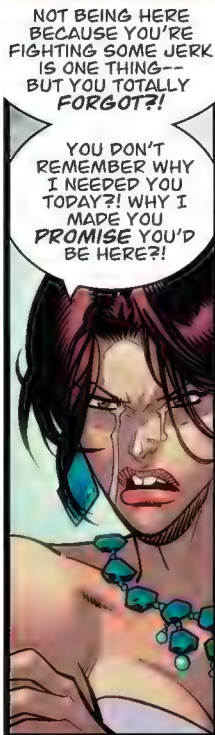
COOK?! WHAT ARE YOU--

OH, GOD... WHAT'S THAT SMELL?



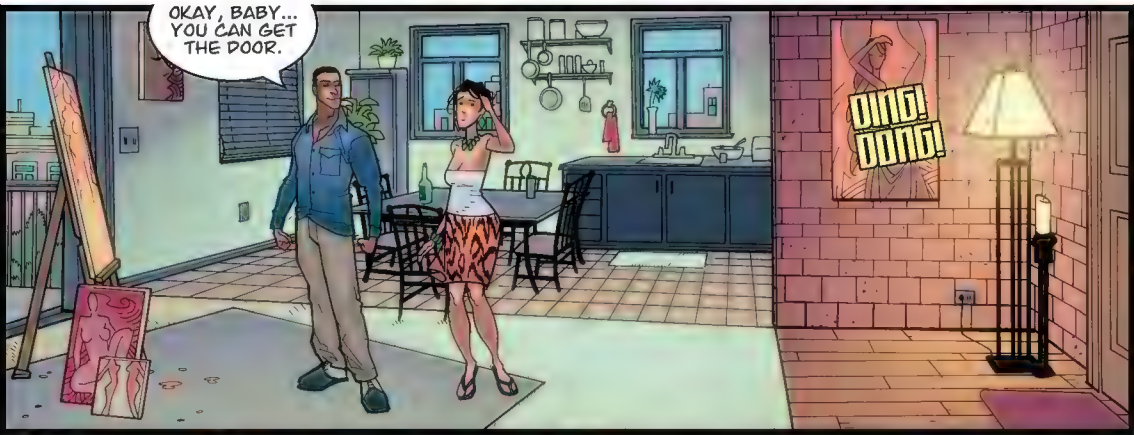
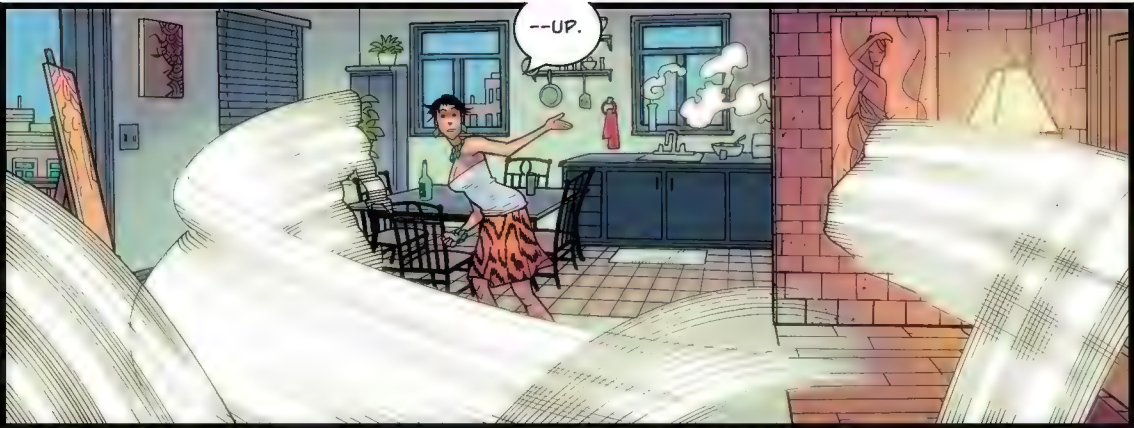
NOT BEING HERE BECAUSE YOU'RE FIGHTING SOME JERK IS ONE THING-- BUT YOU TOTALLY FORGOT?!

YOU DON'T REMEMBER WHY I NEEDED YOU TODAY?! WHY I MADE YOU PROMISE YOU'D BE HERE?!

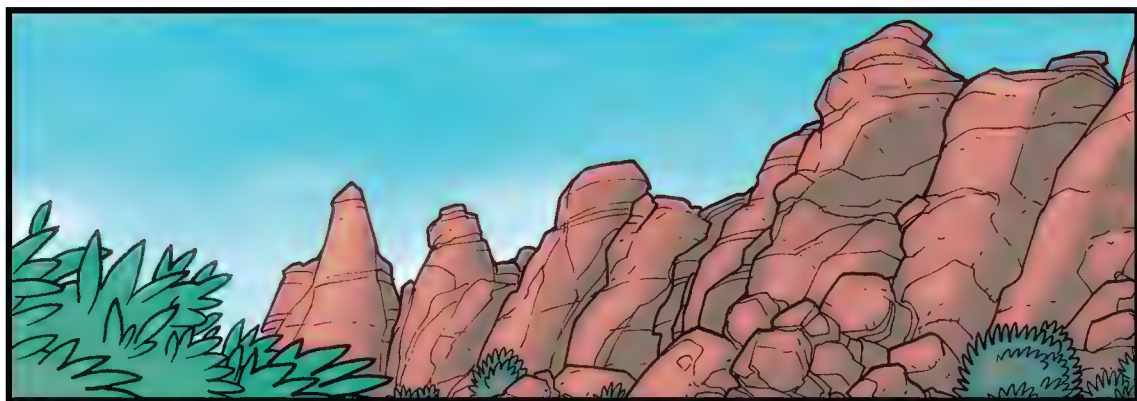


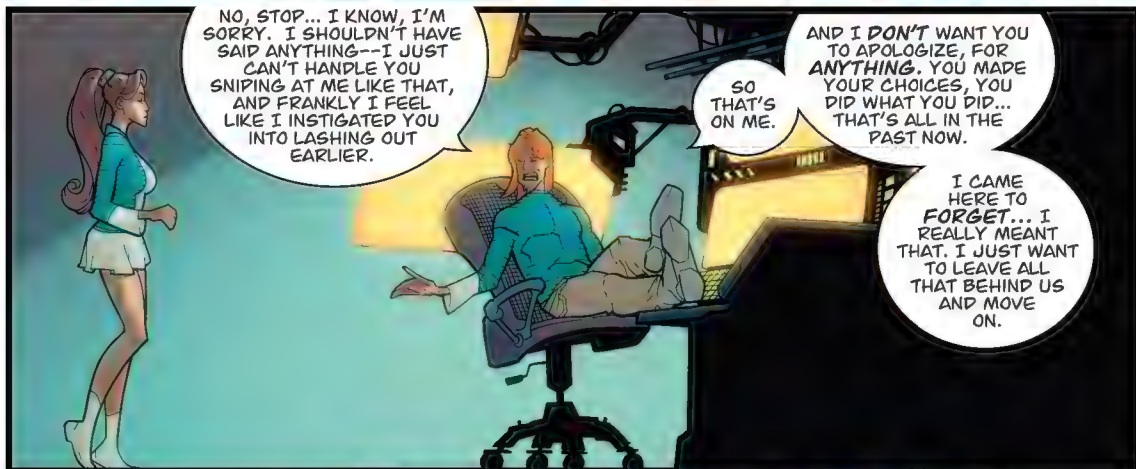
YOUR PARENTS ARE COMING OVER FOR DINNER--AND THEY'RE GOING TO BE HERE ANY--

DING!
DING!







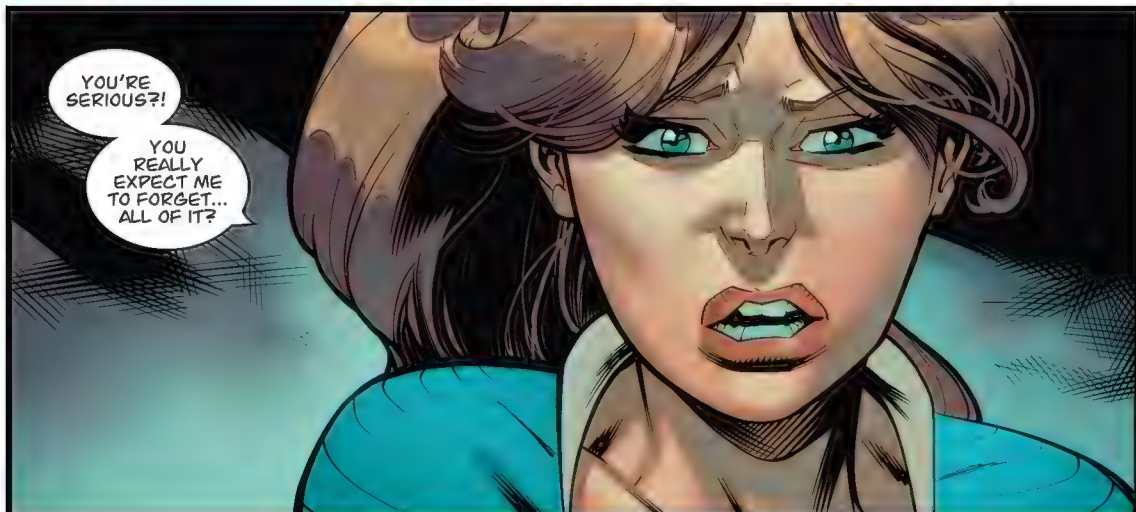


NO, STOP... I KNOW, I'M SORRY. I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID ANYTHING--I JUST CAN'T HANDLE YOU SNIPING AT ME LIKE THAT, AND FRANKLY I FEEL LIKE I INSTIGATED YOU INTO LASHING OUT EARLIER.

SO THAT'S ON ME.

AND I DON'T WANT YOU TO APOLOGIZE, FOR ANYTHING. YOU MADE YOUR CHOICES, YOU DID WHAT YOU DID... THAT'S ALL IN THE PAST NOW.

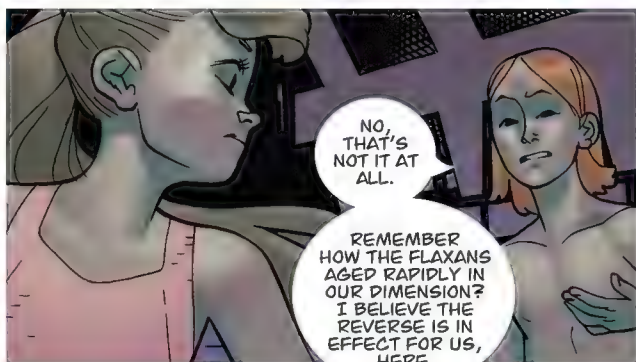
I CAME HERE TO FORGET... I REALLY MEANT THAT. I JUST WANT TO LEAVE ALL THAT BEHIND US AND MOVE ON.



YOU'RE SERIOUS?!

YOU REALLY EXPECT ME TO FORGET... ALL OF IT?







SEVEN-
HUNDRED
YEARS
WE LIVED
TOGETHER!

I KNEW YOU
BETTER THAN
ANYONE ON EARTH
HAS EVER KNOWN
ANYONE! I LOVED
YOU MORE THAN
ANYONE HAS
EVER LOVED
ANYONE!

AND YOU
THREW IT
AWAY--ALL
OF IT--AFTER
ONE SINGLE
MISTAKE!

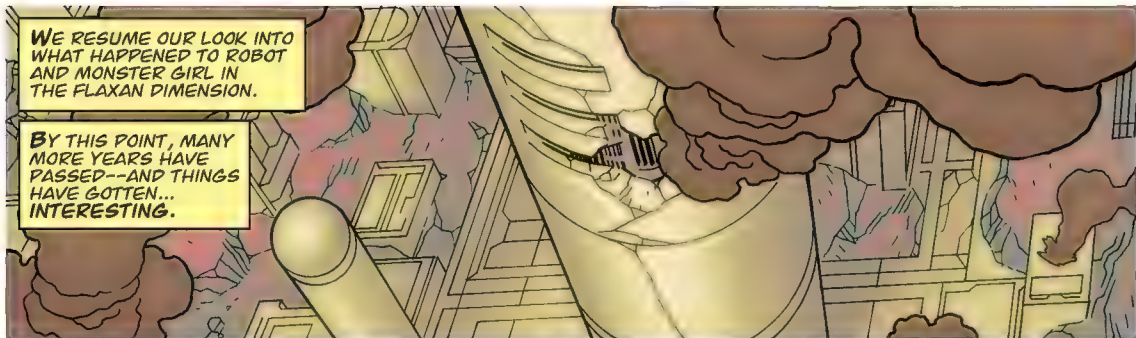


I'LL
NEVER
FORGET
THAT!



CHAPTER 93





WE RESUME OUR LOOK INTO WHAT HAPPENED TO ROBOT AND MONSTER GIRL IN THE FLAXAN DIMENSION.

BY THIS POINT, MANY MORE YEARS HAVE PASSED--AND THINGS HAVE GOTTEN... INTERESTING.



(YOU HAVE DISRUPTED MY ROYAL CHAMBERS, DAMAGED THE GREAT HALLS OF TRUNG AND CORRUPTED A CHAMPION OF OUR ARENA THAT HAS ENTERTAINED ME SINCE I WAS A BOY.)

(I HAVE A SPECIAL PUNISHMENT SET ASIDE JUST FOR YOU--EARTH MAN!)

ZZOAK!



WELL...

...THIS COULD HAVE GONE BETTER.



THAT PLAN TOOK **TWENTY YEARS**, REX. SQUIN LOST HIS LIFE WORKING TO HELP US GAIN ACCESS TO THE THRONE ROOM.

THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO WORK... AND YOU DON'T EVEN SEEM UPSET.

THE PLAN IS **STILL WORKING**, SQUIN FREELY GAVE HIS LIFE FOR THIS CAUSE--AND HIS SACRIFICE WILL NOT BE IN VAIN.

THAT ATTACK ON THE EMPEROR WAS ONLY THE **BEGINNING**.

I'M SORRY I COULDN'T COMMUNICATE THE INTRICACIES OF MY PLAN--OUR ATTACK HAD TO HAPPEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER I'D LOCATED YOU.



WHEN THEY DISCOVERED US IN YOUR CELL FOUR YEARS AGO--I THOUGHT I'D NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN. SQUIN AND I HAVE BEEN WORKING TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO FIND YOU EVER SINCE.

WHILE DOING THAT, HE TAUGHT ME **SO MUCH** ABOUT THE FLAXAN WORLD.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY DO? WHY THEY INVADE SO MANY OTHER DIMENSIONS--LIKE HOW THEY'VE REPEATEDLY ATTEMPTED TO INVADE OURS?

THEY'RE HARVESTING **SLAVES**. IT'S HARD FOR US TO RECOGNIZE, BUT ALL THE VARIOUS LIFE-FORMS WE'VE SEEN--THEY'RE FROM OTHER DIMENSIONS.

THE FLAXANS ARE A WARRIOR RACE, THEY HAVE ONLY SOLDIERS. ALL OTHER TASKS ARE PERFORMED BY SLAVES.

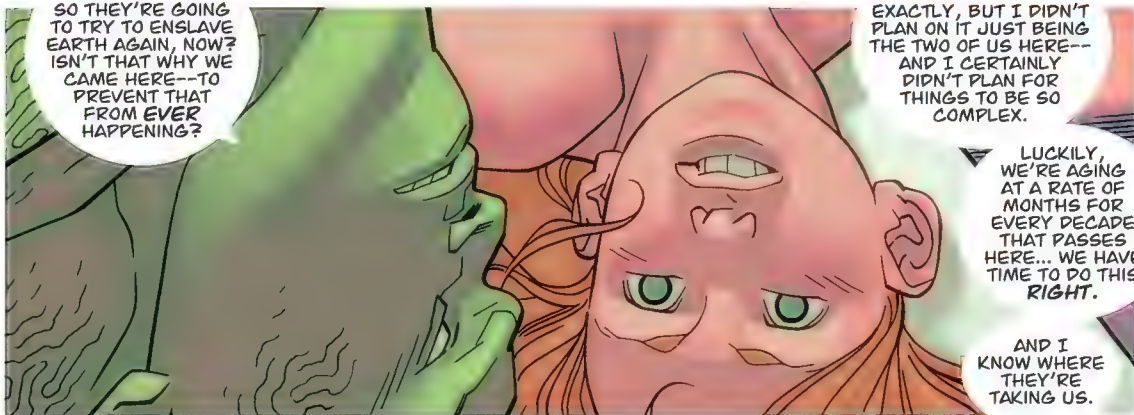


SO THEY'RE GOING TO TRY TO ENSLAVE EARTH AGAIN, NOW? ISN'T THAT WHY WE CAME HERE--TO PREVENT THAT FROM EVER HAPPENING?

EXACTLY, BUT I DIDN'T PLAN ON IT JUST BEING THE TWO OF US HERE--AND I CERTAINLY DIDN'T PLAN FOR THINGS TO BE SO COMPLEX.

LUCKILY WE'RE AGING AT A RATE OF MONTHS FOR EVERY DECADE THAT PASSES HERE... WE HAVE TIME TO DO THIS RIGHT.

AND I KNOW WHERE THEY'RE TAKING US.



WHEN THEY HARVEST SLAVES FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, IT IS USUALLY DONE WITH THE SET PURPOSE THAT THE SLAVES WILL BE USED FOR ALREADY IN MIND.

THE VERY FIRST TIME THEY INVAPED OUR DIMENSION, AND WERE THWARTED, THEY NEEDED THE POPULATION OF EARTH TO WORK IN THEIR MINERAL MINES.

WHEN THEY WERE STOPPED, IT WAS THE WORK OF ONE INDIVIDUAL, INVINCIBLE'S FATHER, **OMNI-MAN**. A PLAN WAS CONCEIVED AND CARRIED OUT TO BRING HIM INTO THE FLAXAN DIMENSION, TO REMOVE HIM FROM THE EQUATION.*

HERE HE IS KNOWN AS **THE DESTROYER**.

*ISSUE 3.

HE WAS HELD CAPTIVE FOR A TIME. THEY'D DEVISED SOME WAY TO INHIBIT HIS NATURAL ABILITIES. BUT HIS CAPTIVITY DID NOT LAST.

TO SAY THEIR PLAN BACKFIRED ON THEM WOULD BE A MASSIVE UNDERSTATEMENT.

IN THE END, THE WAR THEY FOUGHT AGAINST ONE MAN LASTED NEARLY A YEAR IN THIS DIMENSION.

AS A RESULT, THE FLAXANS' EMPIRE WAS IN SHAMBLES, AND KLAXIA, THE CROWN CITY OF THEIR CIVILIZATION, WAS DESTROYED.



IT TOOK THEM GENERATIONS TO PREPARE FOR THEIR NEXT ASSAULT ON EARTH. WHICH WAS DONE WITH THE INTENTION OF CHARGING THE HUMAN POPULATION WITH REBUILDING THEIR BELOVED CITY, KLAXIA.

WHICH IS WHERE THEY ARE TAKING US NOW. AS WE ARE FROM EARTH, IT WILL BE OUR TASK, AND OUR TASK ALONE TO REBUILD A CITY THAT HAS LAID IN WASTE FOR CENTURIES.

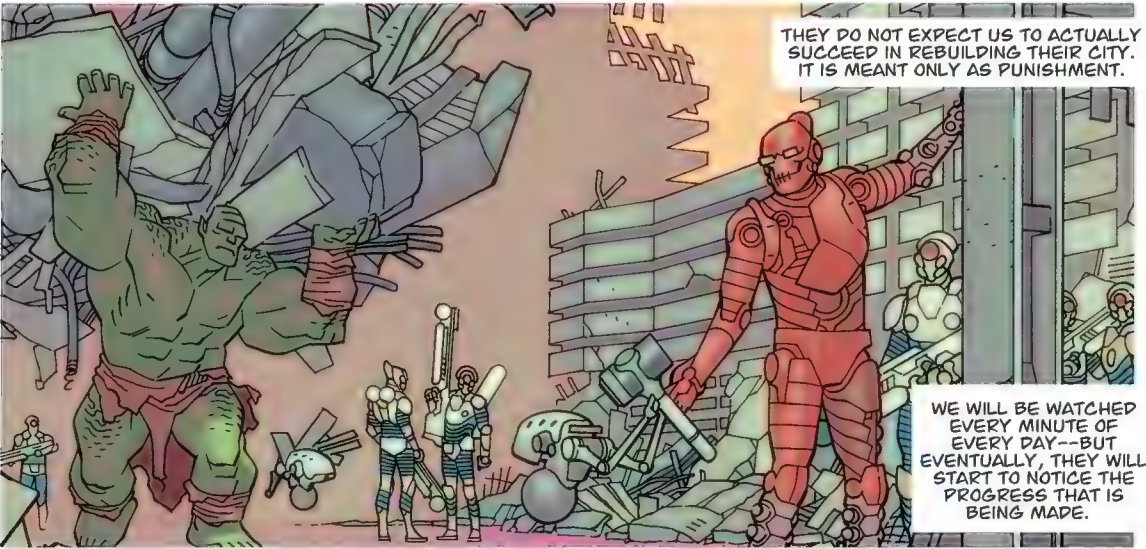
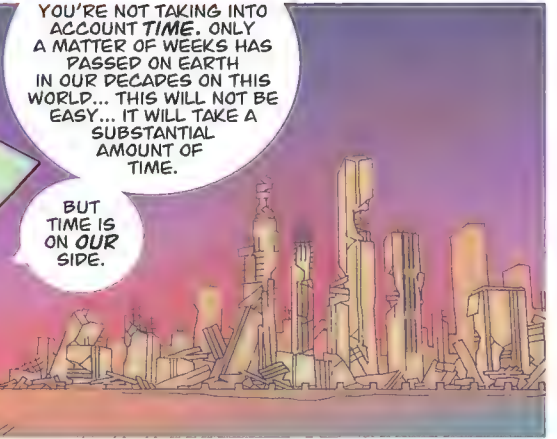


SO WE REBUILD A CITY FOR THEM? HOW IS THAT PART OF OUR PLAN-- HOW DOES THAT HELP US?

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO YOU OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS THAT MADE YOU LESS SMART?

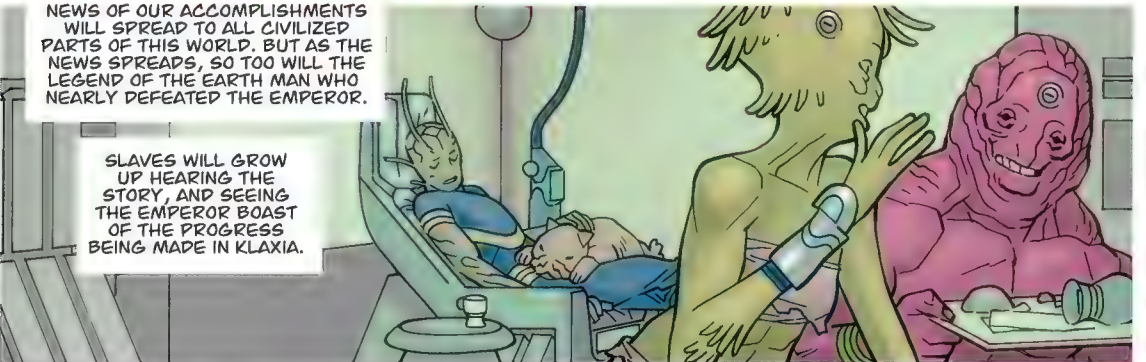
YOU'RE NOT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT TIME. ONLY A MATTER OF WEEKS HAS PASSED ON EARTH IN OUR DECADES ON THIS WORLD... THIS WILL NOT BE EASY... IT WILL TAKE A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF TIME.

BUT TIME IS ON OUR SIDE.



THEY DO NOT EXPECT US TO ACTUALLY SUCCEED IN REBUILDING THEIR CITY. IT IS MEANT ONLY AS PUNISHMENT.

WE WILL BE WATCHED EVERY MINUTE OF EVERY DAY--BUT EVENTUALLY, THEY WILL START TO NOTICE THE PROGRESS THAT IS BEING MADE.



NEWS OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WILL SPREAD TO ALL CIVILIZED PARTS OF THIS WORLD. BUT AS THE NEWS SPREADS, SO TOO WILL THE LEGEND OF THE EARTH MAN WHO NEARLY DEFEATED THE EMPEROR.

SLAVES WILL GROW UP HEARING THE STORY, AND SEEING THE EMPEROR BOAST OF THE PROGRESS BEING MADE IN KLAXIA.



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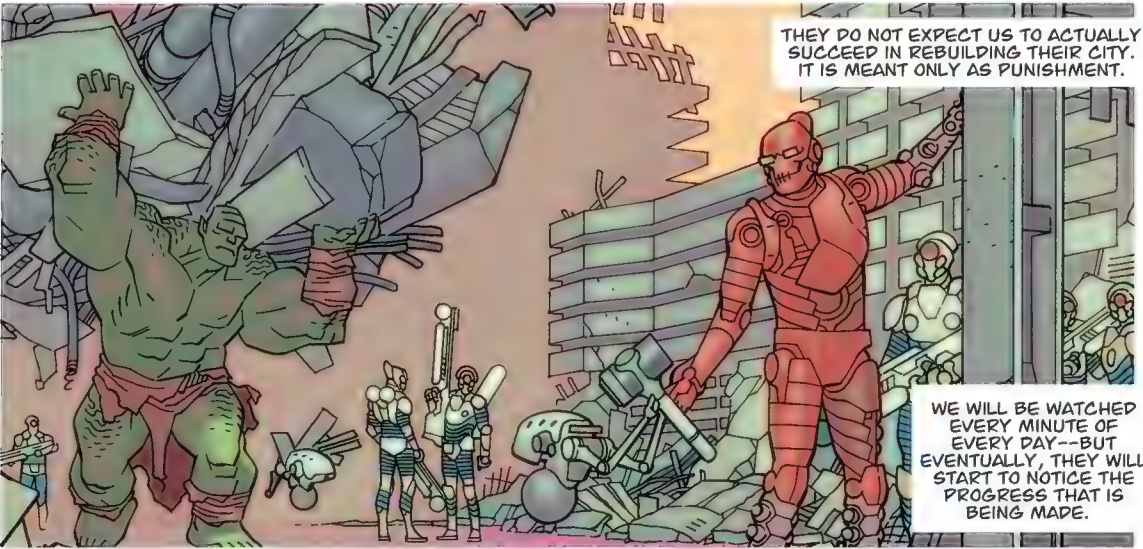
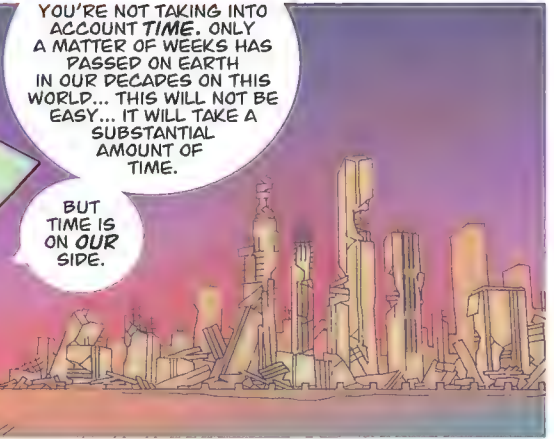


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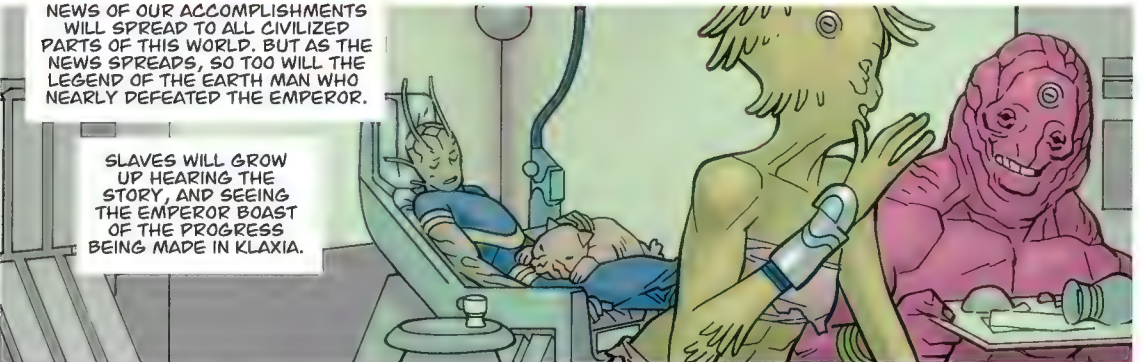
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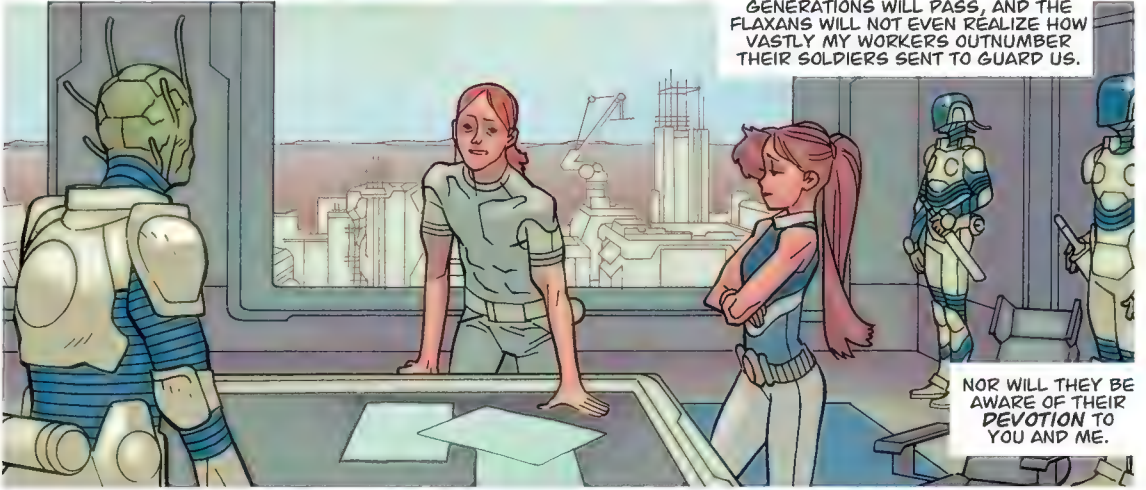
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SLAVES WILL GROW UP HEARING THE STORY, AND SEEING THE EMPEROR BOAST OF THE PROGRESS BEING MADE IN KLAXIA.



IT WILL ONLY BE A MATTER OF YEARS BEFORE THE PROJECT IS ACTUALLY TAKEN SERIOUSLY, AND WE'RE SENT HUNDREDS OF WORKERS TO AID IN OUR TASK.

WORKERS THAT KNOW OF OUR FEAT, STORMING THE EMPEROR'S THRONE ROOM. WORKERS WITH NO LOVE FOR THE FLAXAN EMPIRE.



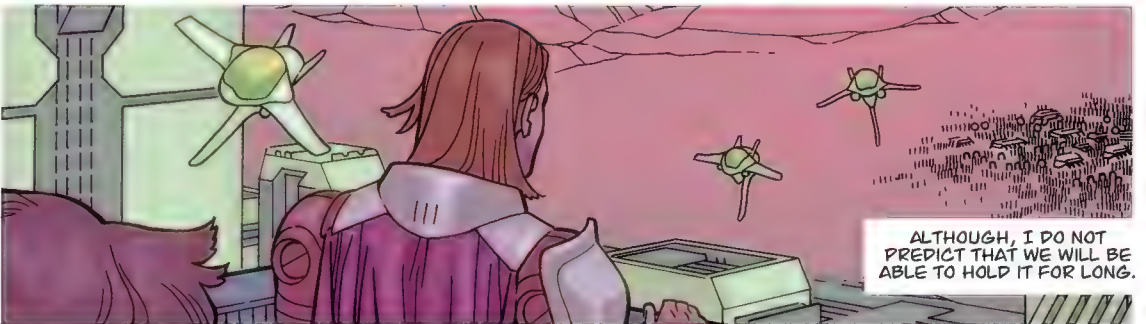
GENERATIONS WILL PASS, AND THE FLAXANS WILL NOT EVEN REALIZE HOW VASTLY MY WORKERS OUTNUMBER THEIR SOLDIERS SENT TO GUARD US.

NOR WILL THEY BE AWARE OF THEIR DEVOTION TO YOU AND ME.



THE REVOLT WILL BE SWIFT.

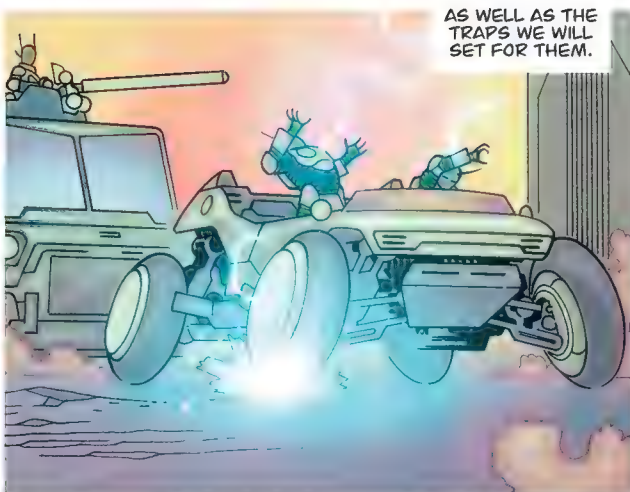
ON THE EVE OF THE COMPLETE RESTORATION OF KLAXIA-- WE WILL CONTROL THE CITY.



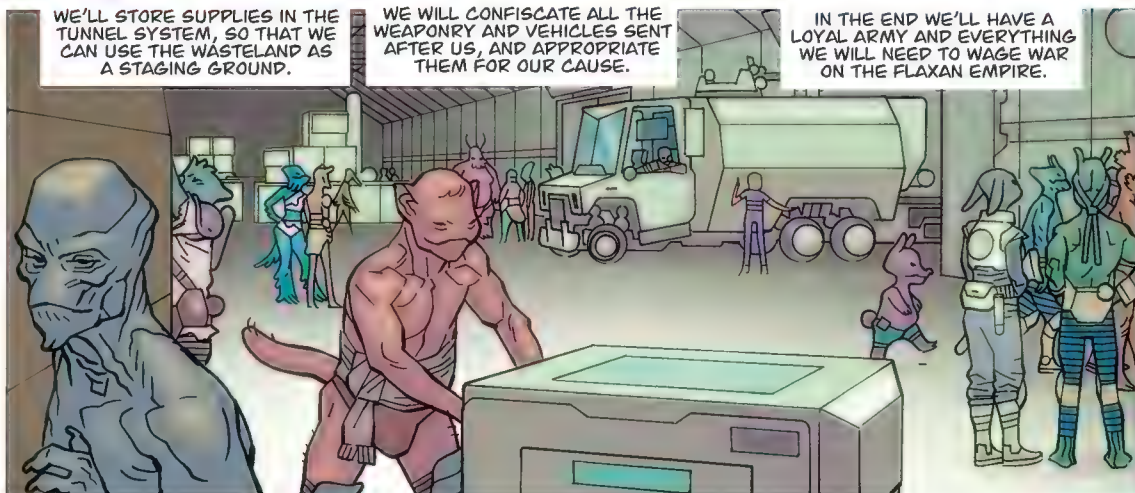
ALTHOUGH, I DO NOT PREDICT THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO HOLD IT FOR LONG.



BUT THE FLAXAN ARMY
WILL BE UNAWARE OF
THE TUNNEL SYSTEM WE
WILL HAVE BUILT
UNDER THE CITY.



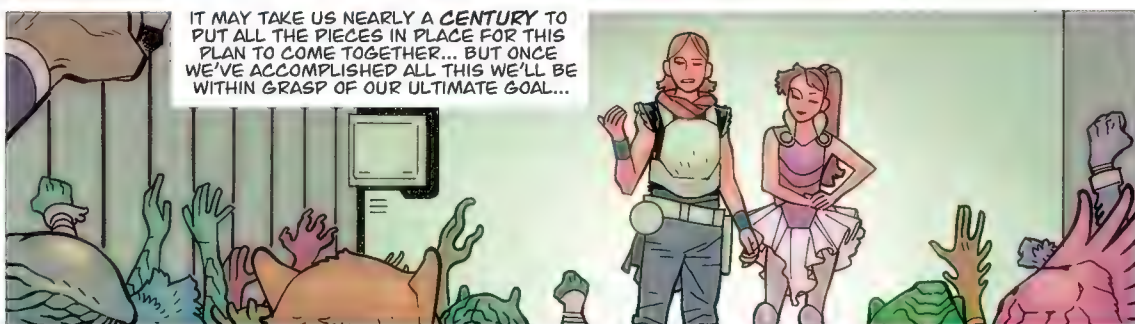
AS WELL AS THE
TRAPS WE WILL
SET FOR THEM.



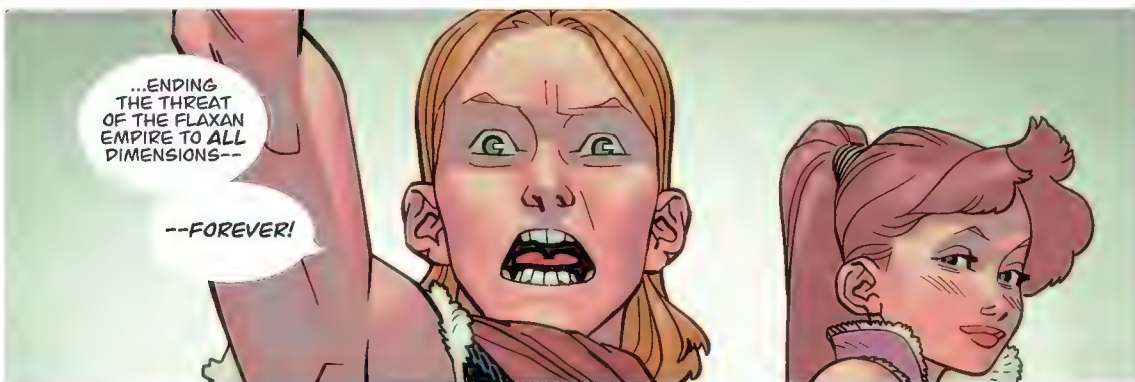
WE'LL STORE SUPPLIES IN THE
TUNNEL SYSTEM, SO THAT WE
CAN USE THE WASTELAND AS
A STAGING GROUND.

WE WILL CONFISCATE ALL THE
WEAPONRY AND VEHICLES SENT
AFTER US, AND APPROPRIATE
THEM FOR OUR CAUSE.

IN THE END WE'LL HAVE A
LOYAL ARMY AND EVERYTHING
WE WILL NEED TO WAGE WAR
ON THE FLAXAN EMPIRE.



IT MAY TAKE US NEARLY A CENTURY TO
PUT ALL THE PIECES IN PLACE FOR THIS
PLAN TO COME TOGETHER... BUT ONCE
WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED ALL THIS WE'LL BE
WITHIN GRASP OF OUR ULTIMATE GOAL...

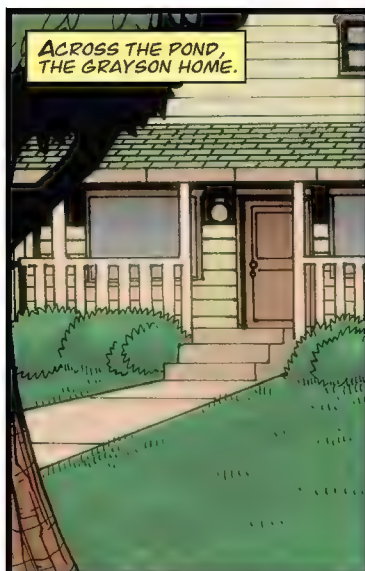


...ENDING
THE THREAT
OF THE FLAXAN
EMPIRE TO ALL
DIMENSIONS--

--FOREVER!



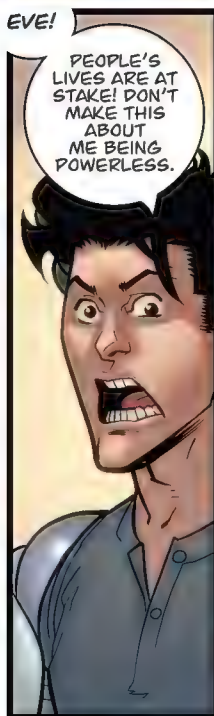




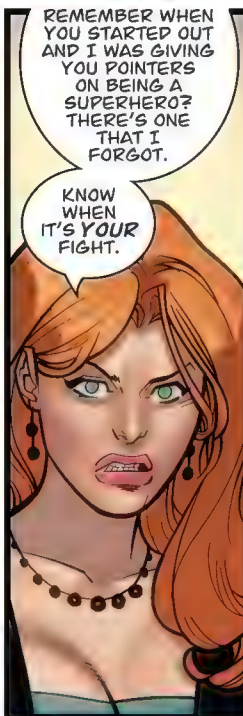
YOU'VE GOT TO HELP STOP THEM! THEY'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF LONDON! WE CAN'T LET ANOTHER MAJOR CITY GET DESTROYED!

AGAIN!

I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE YOU HERE, UNPROTECTED. IF THIS IS A FULL-SCALE INVASION, IT COULD REACH THIS AREA.

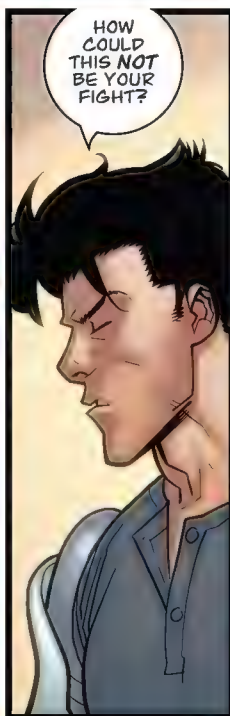


EVE!
PEOPLE'S LIVES ARE AT STAKE! DON'T MAKE THIS ABOUT ME BEING POWERLESS.



REMEMBER WHEN YOU STARTED OUT AND I WAS GIVING YOU POINTERS ON BEING A SUPERHERO? THERE'S ONE THAT I FORGOT.

KNOW WHEN IT'S YOUR FIGHT.

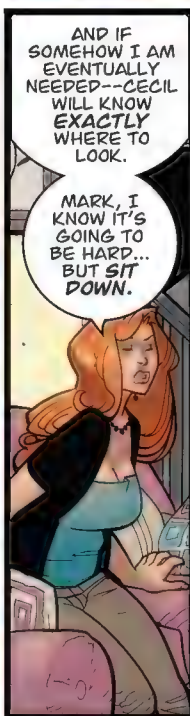


HOW COULD THIS NOT BE YOUR FIGHT?



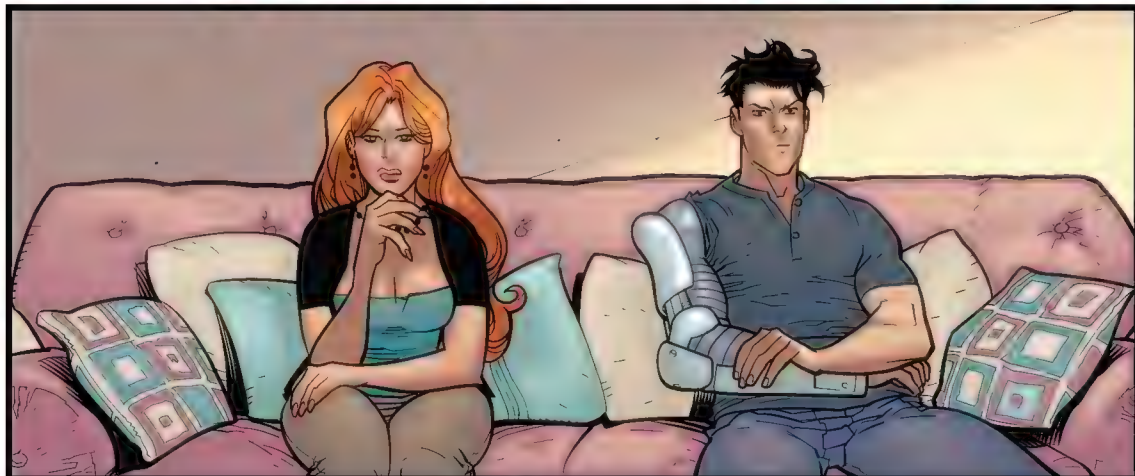
HOW WOULD I EVEN GET THERE? I CAN'T FLY AS FAST AS YOU COULD.

FACE IT, THERE ARE COUNTLESS OTHER SUPERHEROES WHO ARE FASTER, STRONGER AND SMARTER THAN ME... AND THEY'RE NO DOUBT ALREADY ON THEIR WAY.



AND IF SOMEHOW I AM EVENTUALLY NEEDED--CECIL WILL KNOW EXACTLY WHERE TO LOOK.

MARK, I KNOW IT'S GOING TO BE HARD... BUT SIT DOWN.





I'M SORRY, GUYS... I'VE GOT A MEETING AT THIS GALLERY AND I, UM... NEED TO GO.



ARE YOU **SERIOUS?! WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LONDON? YOU'RE JUST GOING TO GO?**

WE'LL PROBABLY SEE YOUR BROTHER ON TV! CANCEL IT.

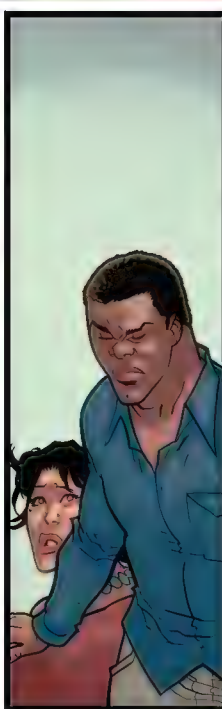
I'VE GOTTA MAKE A LIVING, MOM.

THIS GALLERY OPENING ISN'T FOR MONTHS, I CAN'T BLOW IT BY SKIPPING THIS MEETING.



HOW DID YOU AND YOUR BROTHER END UP SO DIFFERENT?

IT'S A DAMN SHAME.



THE **REAL SHAME IS THAT YOU--!**



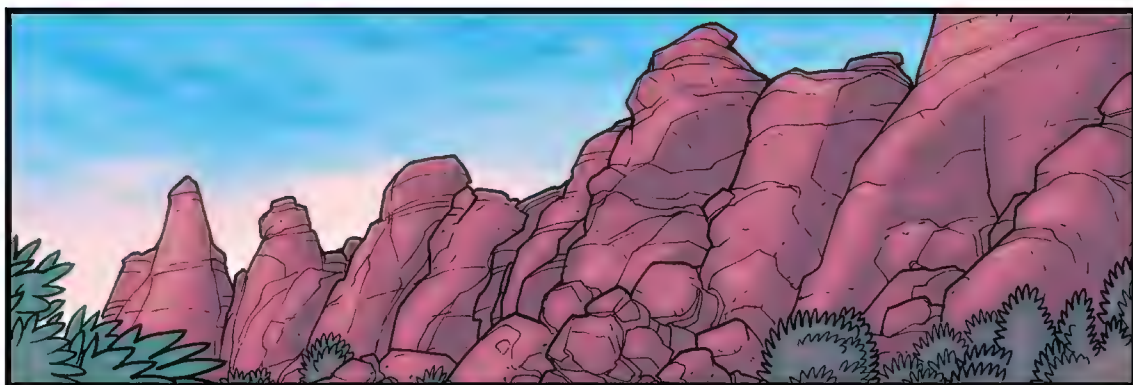
OKAY, I NEED TO BE GOING NOW. DON'T GET TOO WORRIED ABOUT WHAT'S ON THE TV, IT'S HALF A WORLD AWAY.



I HEAR **TYRONE** HAS A NEW COSTUME, KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR IT.

BYE.





IT'S NOT THE FLAXANS. THERE IS NO WAY. THAT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE.

IT'S SOMEONE ELSE. ANOTHER FORCE FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, USING SIMILAR ARMOR... IT CAN'T BE THE FLAXANS.

WELL, IT SURE AS HELL LOOKS LIKE IT'S THEM! SO STOP ARGUING WITH ME AND START SCRAMBLING TEAMS!

THIS ARGUMENT IS BARELY TAKING UP A FRACTION OF MY COGNITIVE BANDWIDTH. I'VE ALREADY BEGUN SCRAMBLING TEAMS.

THE ACTIONEERS ARE ON SITE. CAPES, WOLF-MAN AND THE WOLF C.O.R.P.S. ARE ON STANDBY.

TWO GUARDIANS TEAMS ARE EN ROUTE AND WE'RE ABOUT TO DISPATCH THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM FROM THIS BASE MOMENTARILY.

BRIT, IS YOUR TEAM READY TO GO UP AGAINST THIS INVADING FORCE THAT IS MOST CERTAINLY NOT THE FLAXANS?

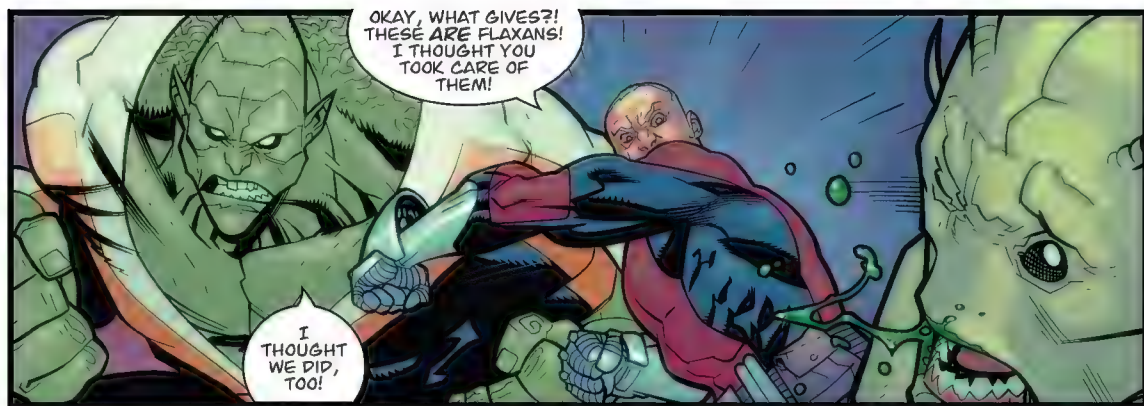
AFFIRMATIVE.

SEND US IN, ROBOT.



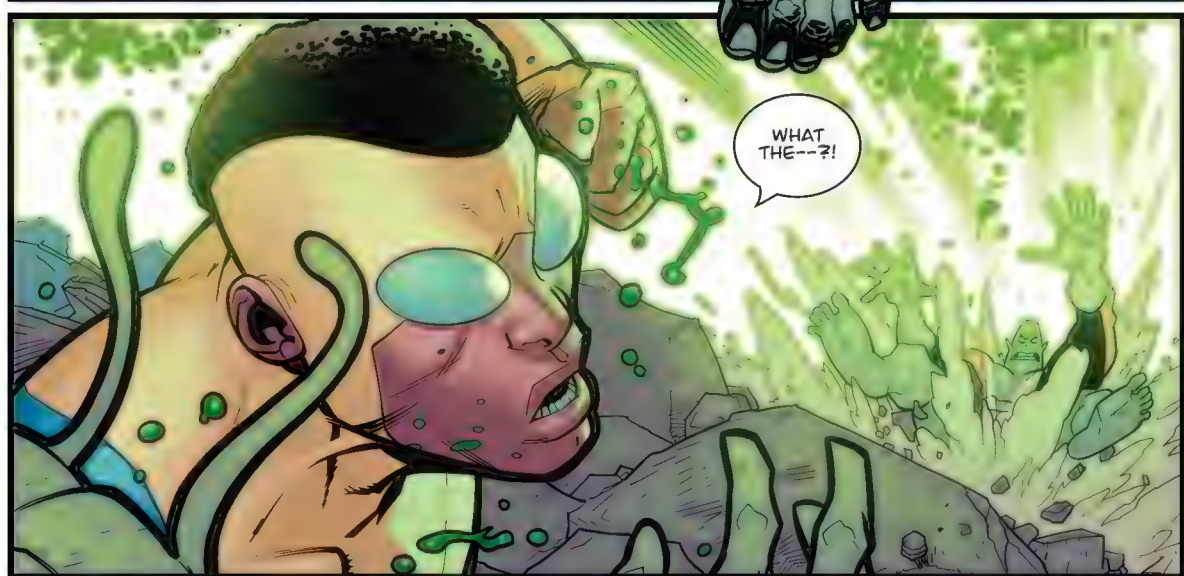
WE NOW
JOIN SHEER
PANDEMONIUM
ALREADY IN
PROGRESS!

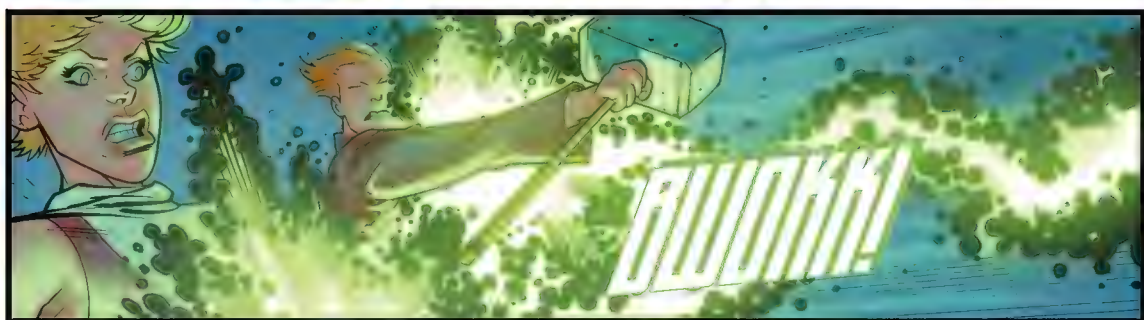
WOW!







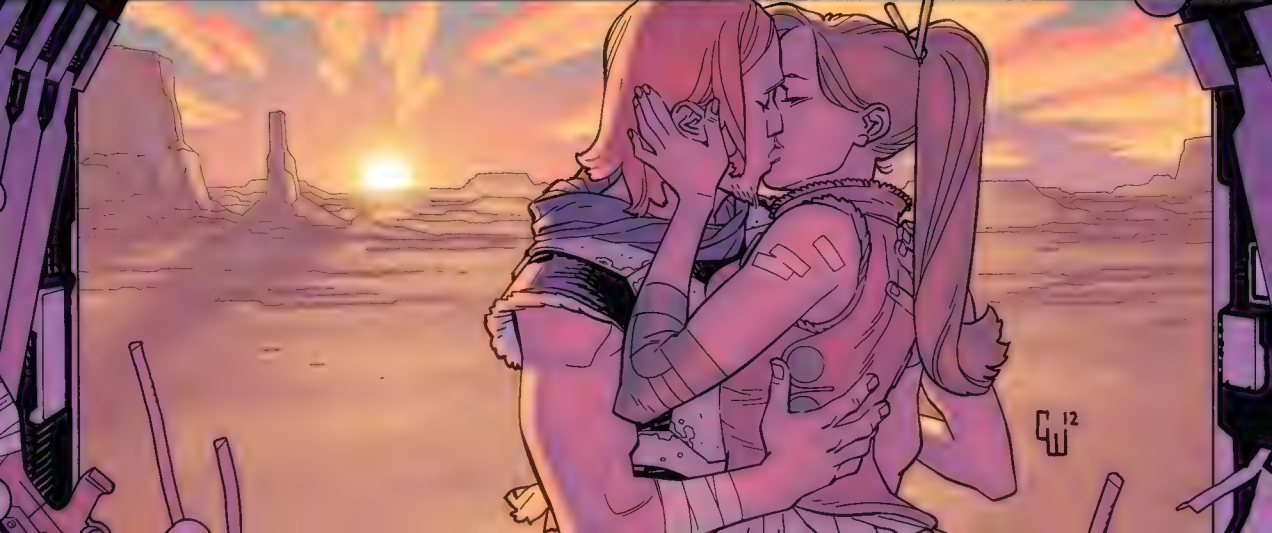


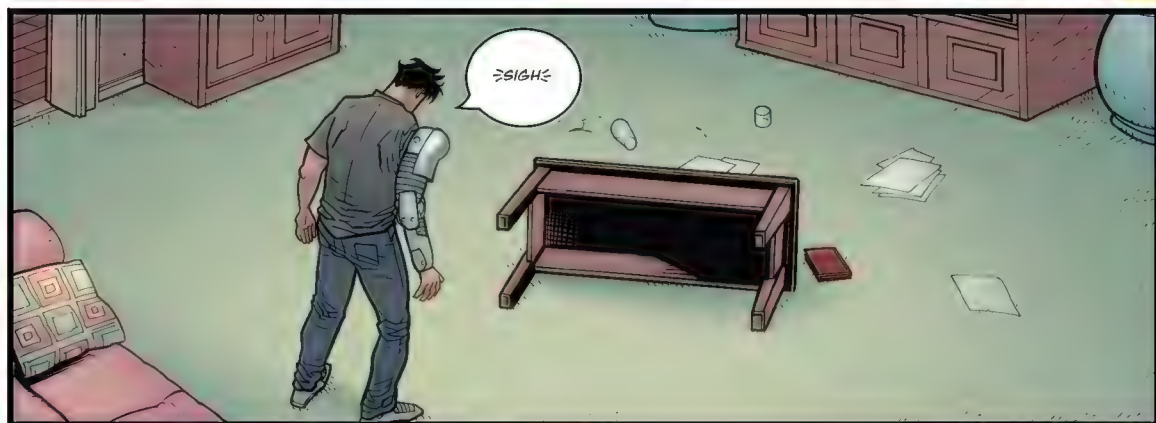
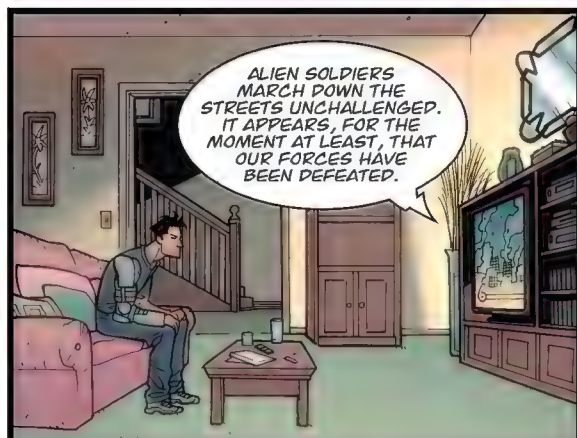
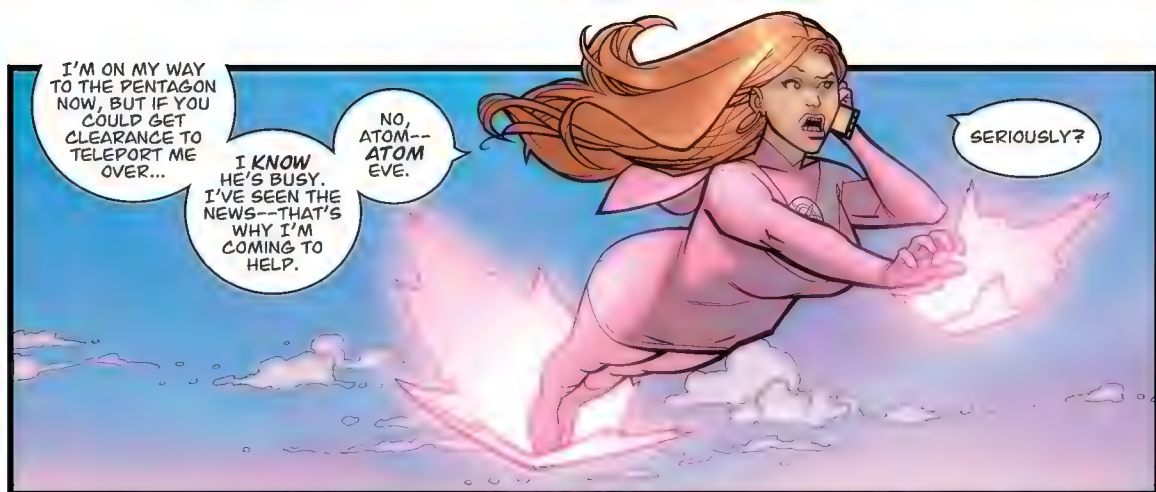




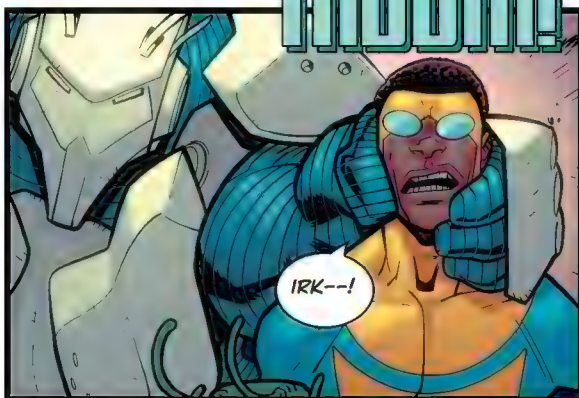
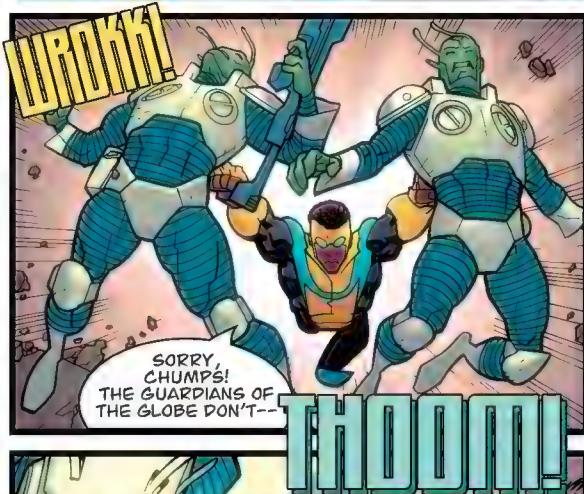


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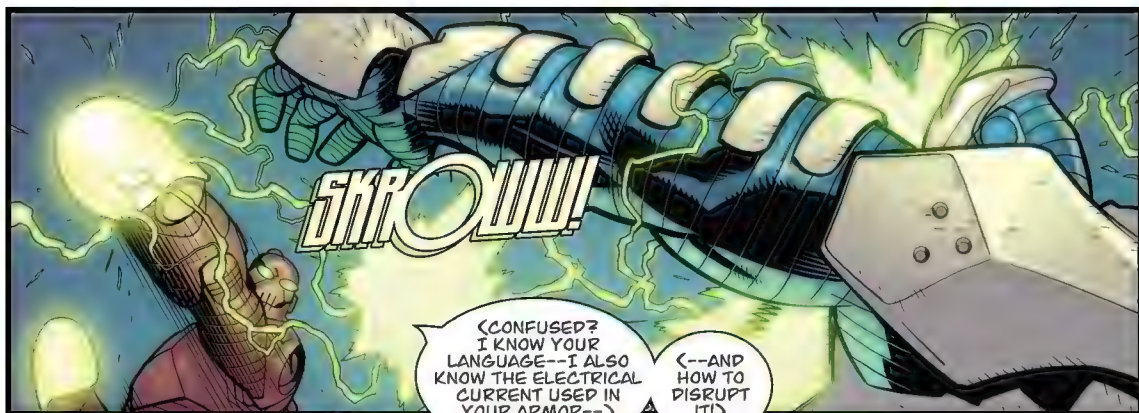


FOR THE
RECORD, I
WAS GOING TO
BREAK FREE
ON MY OWN!

I BELIEVE
YOU--NOW
HELP MY
DRONES
WITH THE
SOLDIERS--

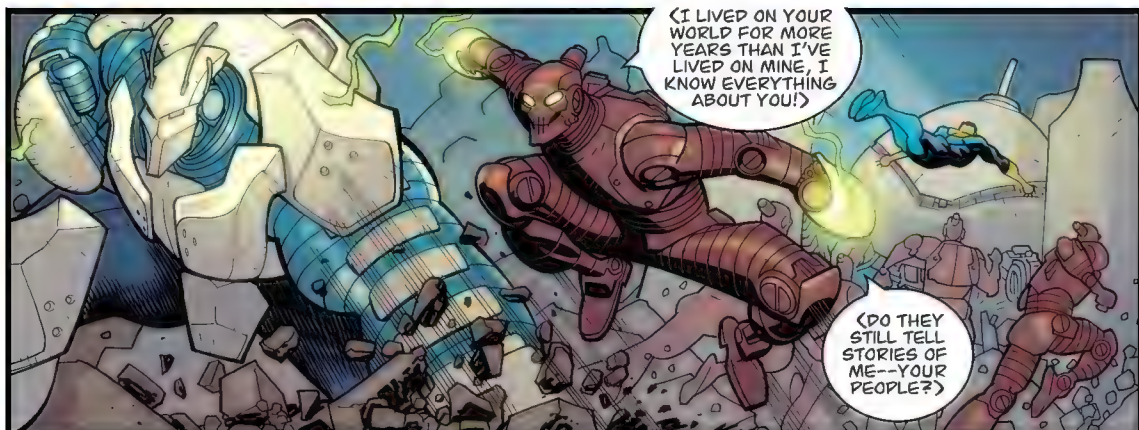
THIS
ONE IS
MINE!

THOOOM!



(CONFUSED?
I KNOW YOUR
LANGUAGE--I ALSO
KNOW THE ELECTRICAL
CURRENT USED IN
YOUR ARMOR--)

(--AND
HOW TO
DISRUPT
IT!)



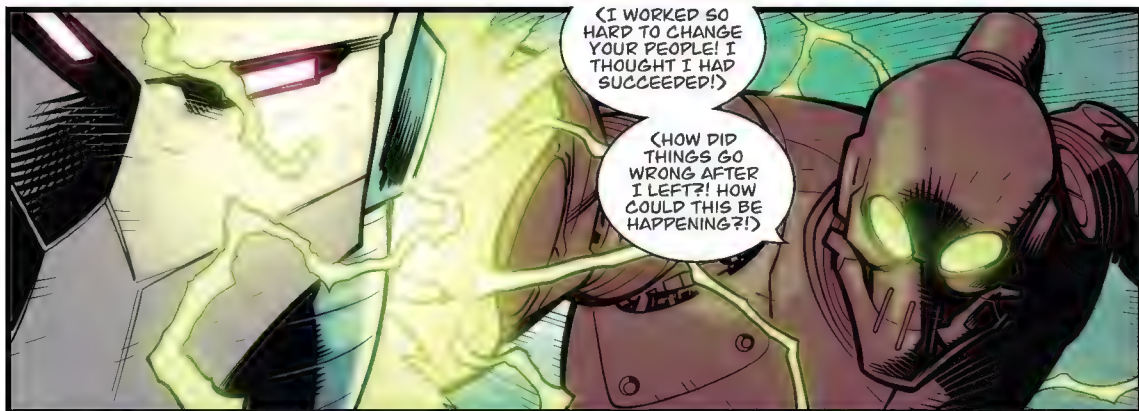
(I LIVED ON YOUR
WORLD FOR MORE
YEARS THAN I'VE
LIVED ON MINE, I
KNOW EVERYTHING
ABOUT YOU!)

(DO THEY
STILL TELL
STORIES OF
ME--YOUR
PEOPLE?)



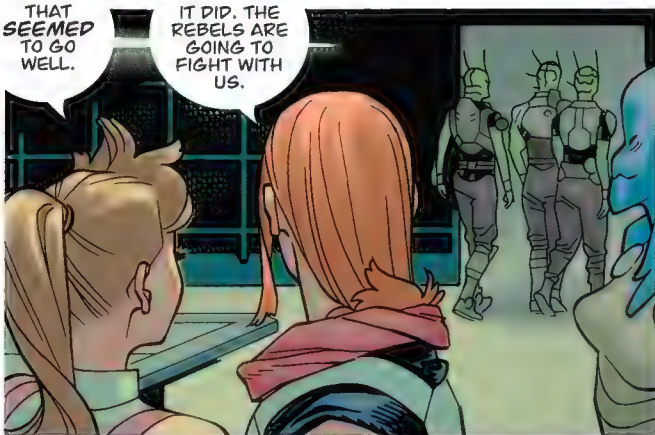
(I CHANGED THE
COURSE OF YOUR
CIVILIZATION, YOU
KNOW... OR AT
LEAST--I THOUGHT
I DID...)

(DID YOU
TAKE COMMAND
BY FORCE? FIGHT
TO RETURN THE
FLAXANS TO THE
OLD WAYS--
THE WARRING
WAYS?!)



(I WORKED SO
HARD TO CHANGE
YOUR PEOPLE! I
THOUGHT I HAD
SUCCEEDED!)

(HOW DID
THINGS GO
WRONG AFTER
I LEFT?! HOW
COULD THIS BE
HAPPENING?!)





WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S
WRONG, AMANDA?



THE BELT YOU INVENTED...
IT'S **WORKING**. IT'S
ABSORBING THE ENERGY FROM
MY MONSTER FORM, KEEPING IT
FROM REVERSING MY AGING.

I'M GETTING OLDER.
SLOWLY, BUT I AM
GETTING OLDER.

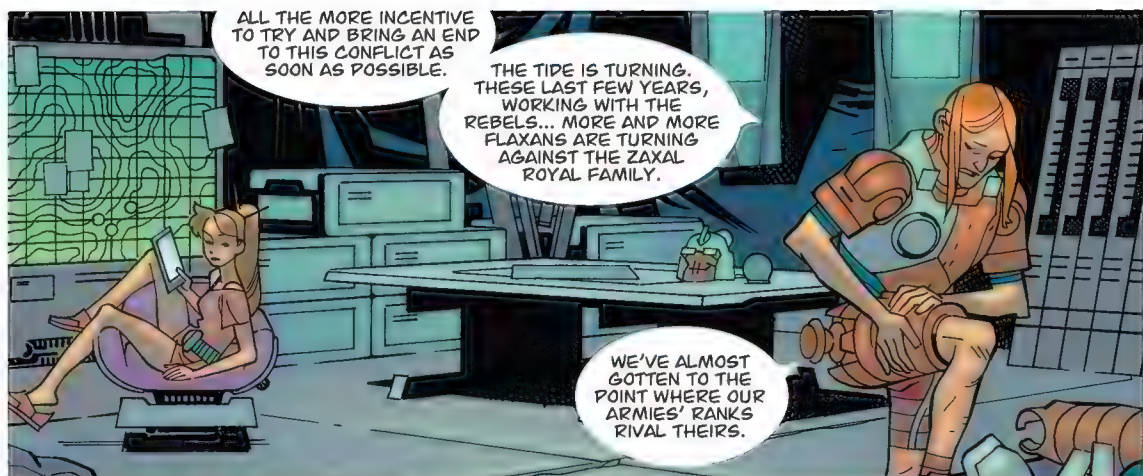


THAT'S GREAT.
THAT'S WHAT YOU
WANTED, RIGHT?

YES, BUT...



IF THIS WAR RAGES ON... AND I KNOW
I'M RIGHT WHEN I SAY THERE'S NO
END IN SIGHT... IT WILL EVENTUALLY
GET TO A POINT WHEN I'M **USELESS**
IN BATTLE.



ALL THE MORE INCENTIVE TO TRY AND BRING AN END TO THIS CONFLICT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THE TIDE IS TURNING. THESE LAST FEW YEARS, WORKING WITH THE REBELS... MORE AND MORE FLAXANS ARE TURNING AGAINST THE ZAXAL ROYAL FAMILY.

WE'VE ALMOST GOTTEN TO THE POINT WHERE OUR ARMIES' RANKS RIVAL THEIRS.

FANTASTIC, SO... WE'RE ALMOST EVENLY MATCHED?

HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO BE HERE? THIS WORLD, I... WE'VE ALREADY LIVED HERE FAR LONGER THAN WE EVER LIVED ON EARTH, BUT I STILL FEEL LIKE WE DON'T BELONG.

CAN'T WE ATTACK ONE OF THEIR DIMENSIONAL HUBS, GO BACK FOR JUST A LITTLE BIT?



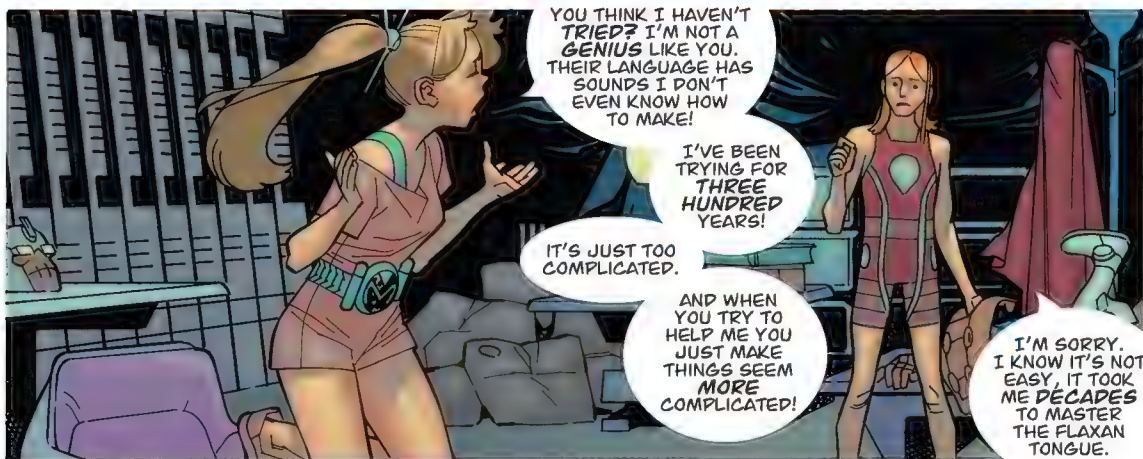
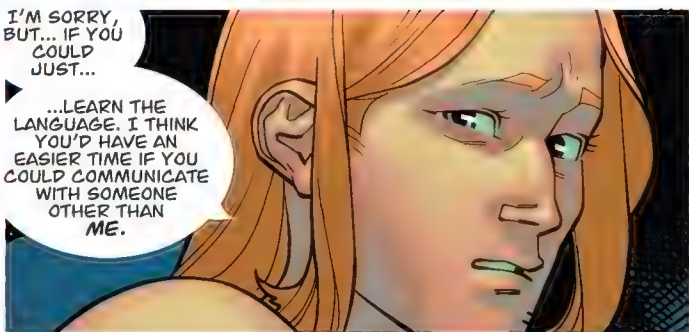
ONLY A MATTER OF MONTHS HAVE PASSED ON EARTH--- IT WILL BE THERE WAITING FOR US WHEN WE'RE READY, I PROMISE.

WERE WE TO GO THERE FOR EVEN A WEEK, WHEN WE RETURNED SO MUCH TIME WOULD HAVE PASSED THAT ALL OUR WORK WOULD BE UNDONE.

WE HAVE TO SEE THIS THROUGH.

I'M SORRY, BUT... IF YOU COULD JUST...

...LEARN THE LANGUAGE. I THINK YOU'D HAVE AN EASIER TIME IF YOU COULD COMMUNICATE WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN ME.



YOU THINK I HAVEN'T TRIED? I'M NOT A GENIUS LIKE YOU. THEIR LANGUAGE HAS SOUNDS I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO MAKE!

I'VE BEEN TRYING FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS!

IT'S JUST TOO COMPLICATED.

AND WHEN YOU TRY TO HELP ME YOU JUST MAKE THINGS SEEM MORE COMPLICATED!

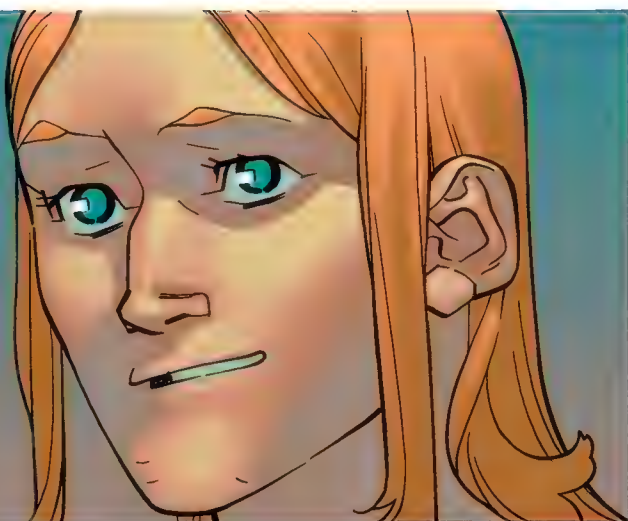
I'M SORRY. I KNOW IT'S NOT EASY, IT TOOK ME DECADES TO MASTER THE FLAXAN TONGUE.

I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO UPSET YOU. I KNOW THIS ISN'T EASY FOR YOU. ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT WHAT WE'RE DOING IS NOTHING LESS THAN SAVING OUR WORLD.

AND WHILE IT WILL MOST DEFINITELY BE THE LONGEST STRETCH OF TIME ANY HUMAN HAS EVER EXPERIENCED, ASIDE FROM MAYBE THE IMMORTAL... IT WILL BE TEMPORARY.

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH... IF I COULD HAVE CHOSEN ANYONE TO ACCOMPANY ME ON THIS MISSION...

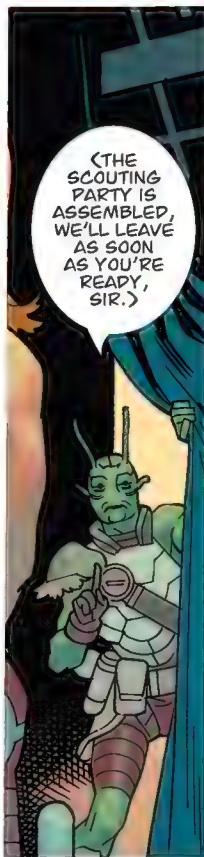
...IT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOU.



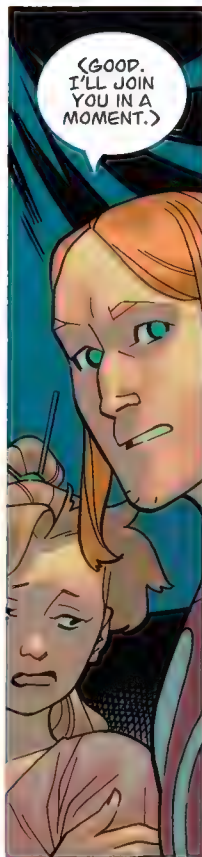
WELL, I...



(THE SCOUTING PARTY IS ASSEMBLED, WE'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS YOU'RE READY, SIR.)

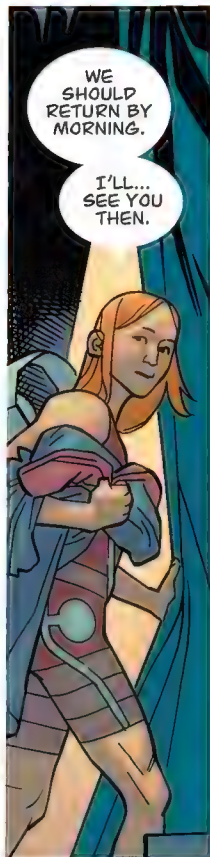


(GOOD. I'LL JOIN YOU IN A MOMENT.)



WE SHOULD RETURN BY MORNING.

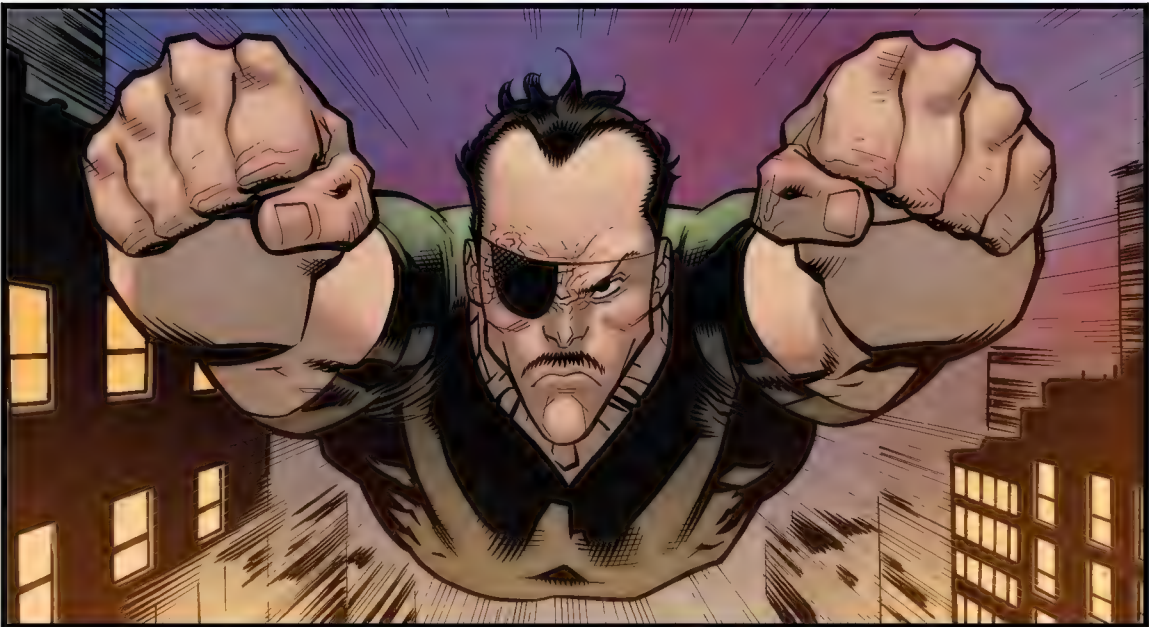
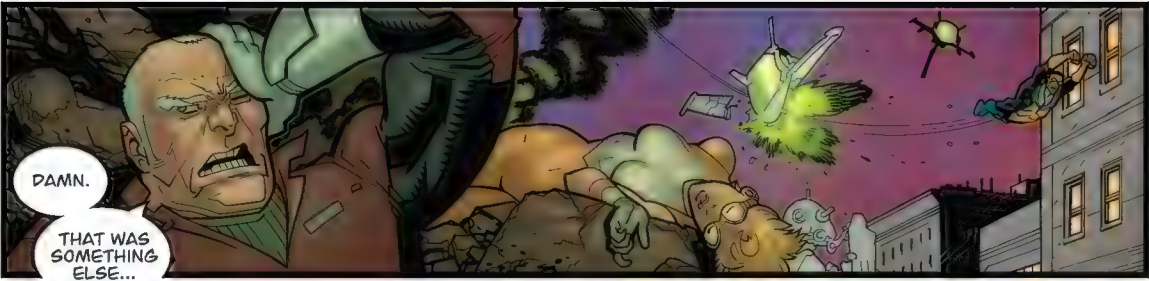
I'LL... SEE YOU THEN.



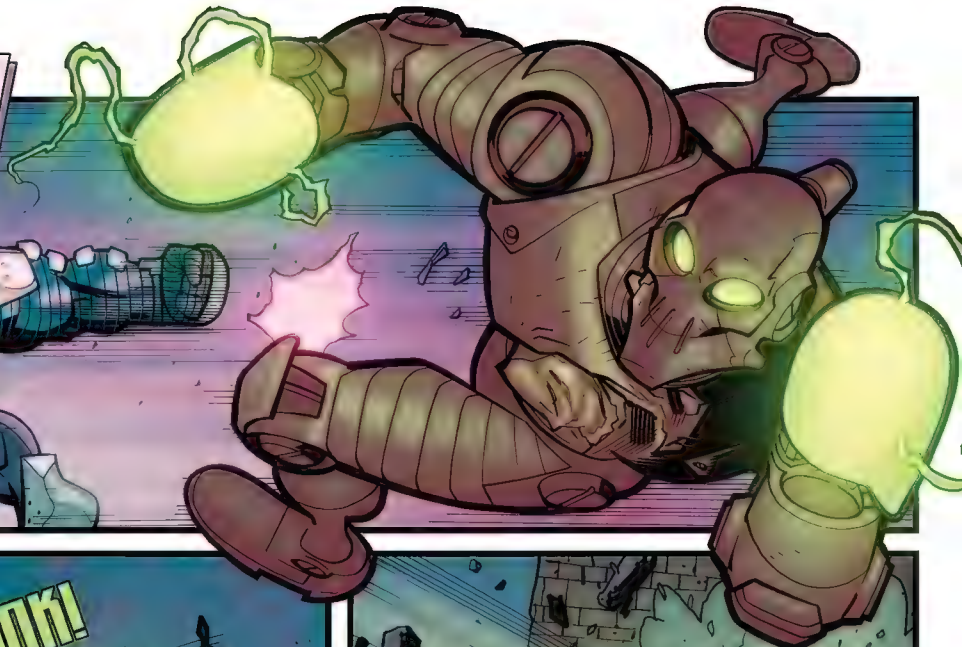
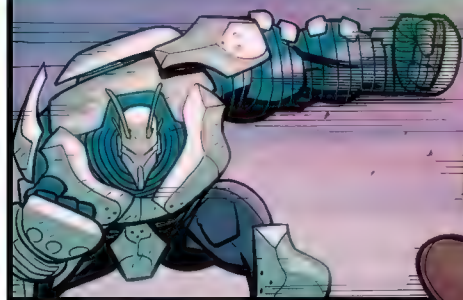
YEAH.

...

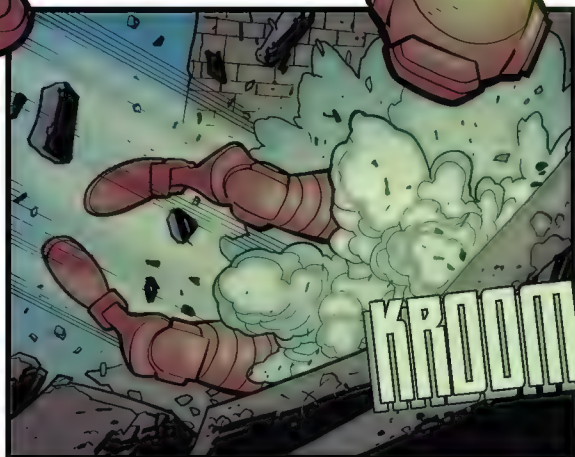




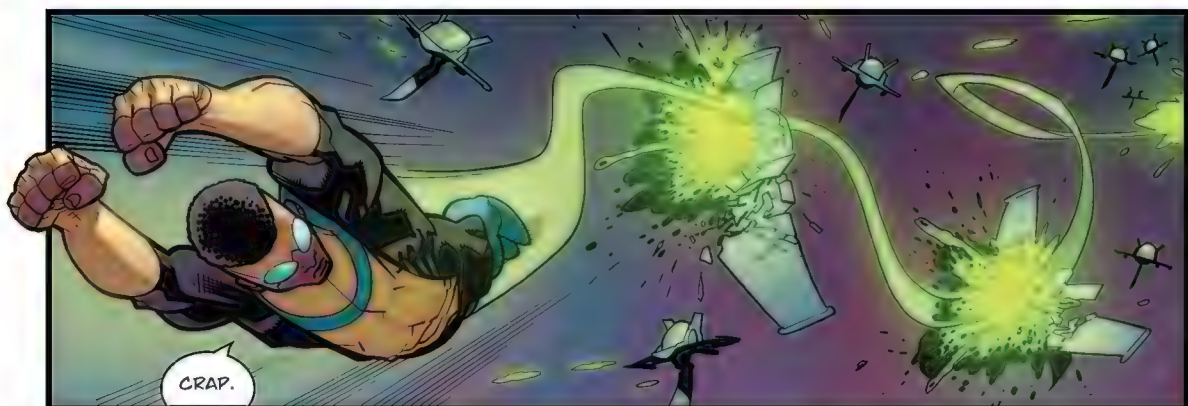
WRAMM!



CHOKI!



KROOM!



CRAP.

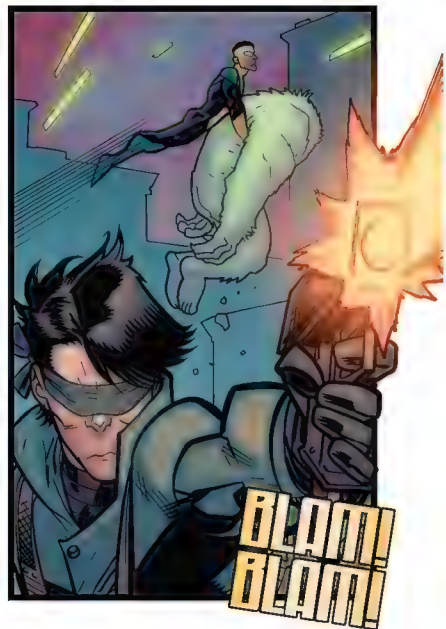


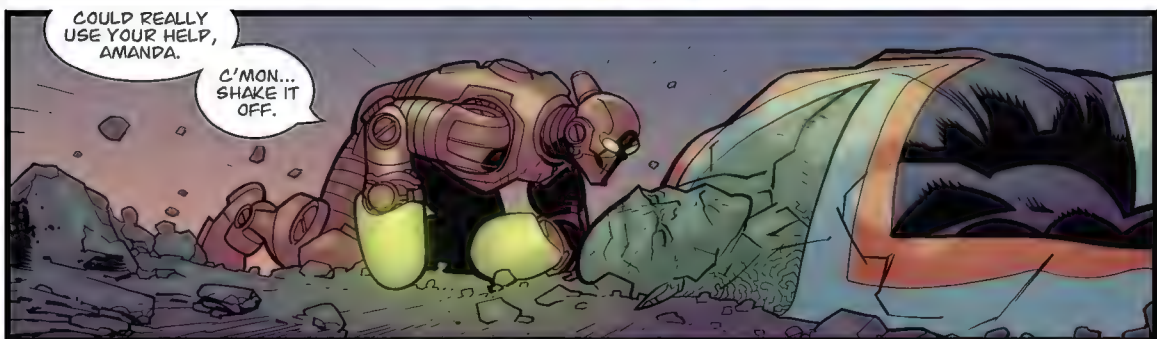
ANY IDEAS?

WE NEED TO CONTAIN THEM, DRIVE THEM OUT OF THE CITY CENTER. THIS IS A NEW TACTIC FOR THEM, THEY USUALLY INVADE SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS, EASIER TO ESTABLISH A FOOTHOLD-- BUT LONDON COULD PROVIDE A MUCH STRONGER STAGING GROUND.

FOR NOW, I NEED YOU TO GET OUR INJURED OUT OF HARM'S WAY. GET THEM TO A ROOFTOP SO OUR PEOPLE CAN SAFELY TELEPORT THEM AWAY.

GO!





COULD REALLY
USE YOUR HELP,
AMANDA.

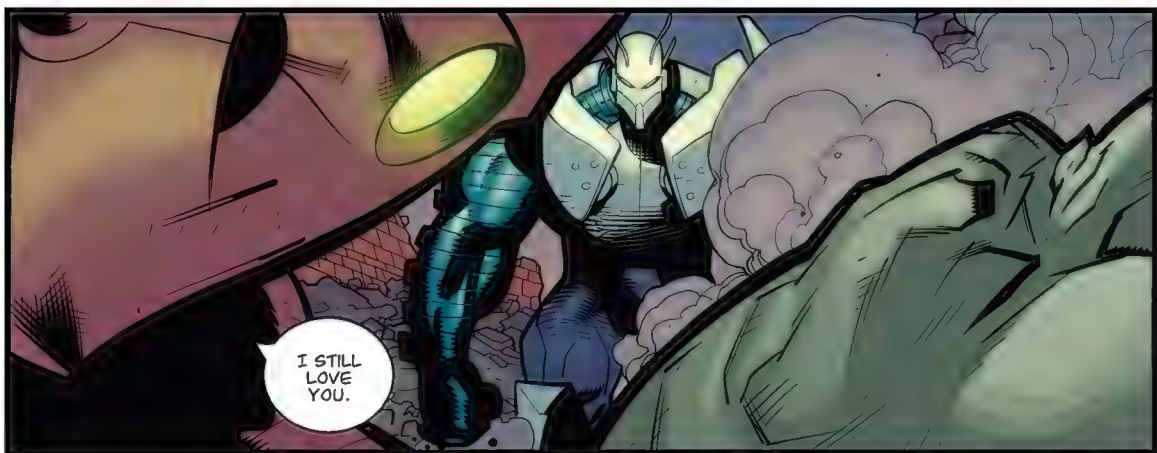
C'MON...
SHAKE IT
OFF.



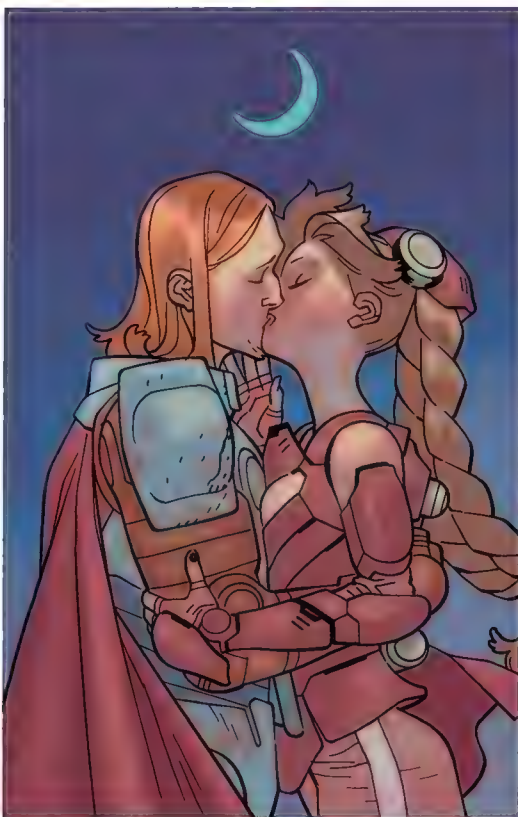
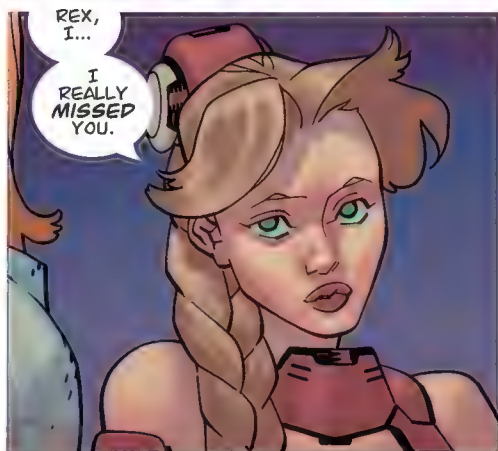
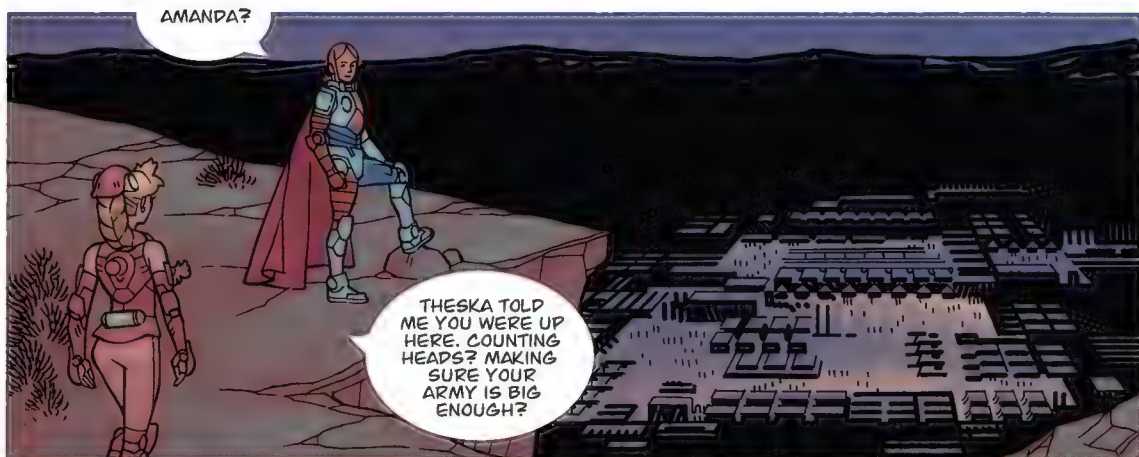
PLEASE.

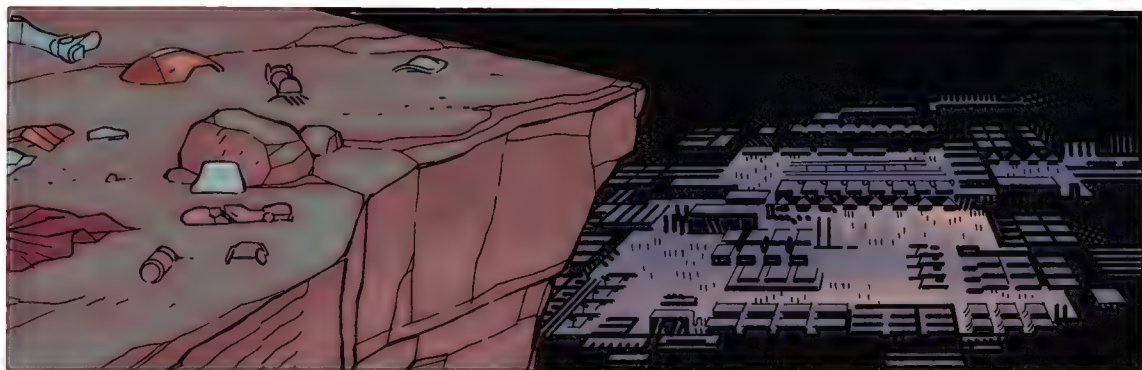
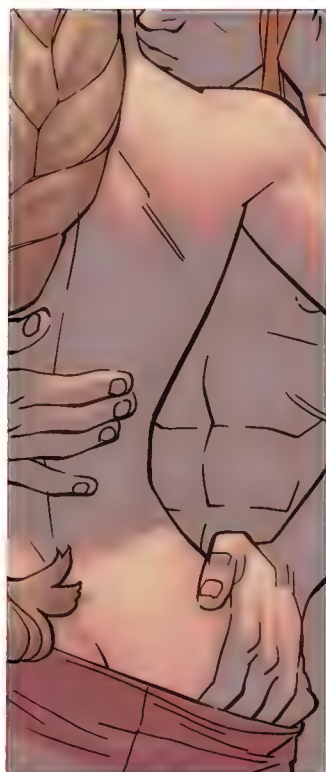
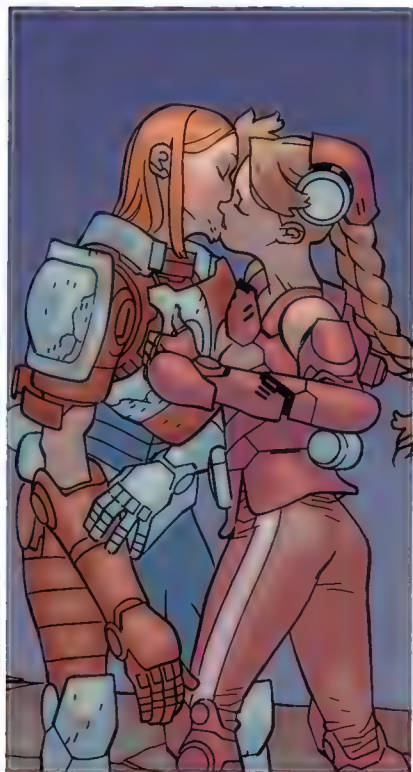
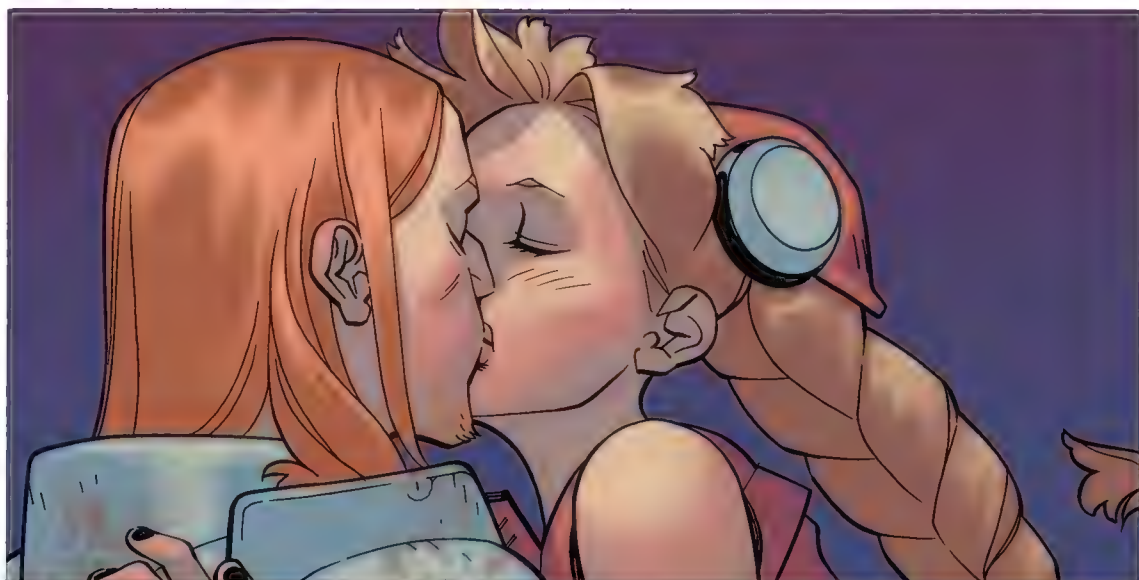


I--



I STILL
LOVE
YOU.

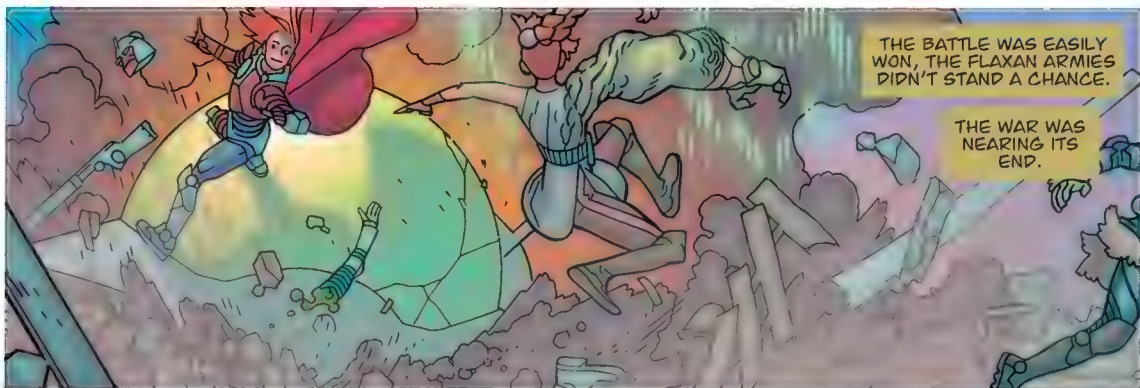






AND LIKE THAT, AFTER
SO MANY DECADES...
CENTURIES OF WAR,
WITH A SINGULAR MISSION:
END THE THREAT TO THE
WORLD WE KNEW...

WE FOUGHT
FOR A
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
REASON.

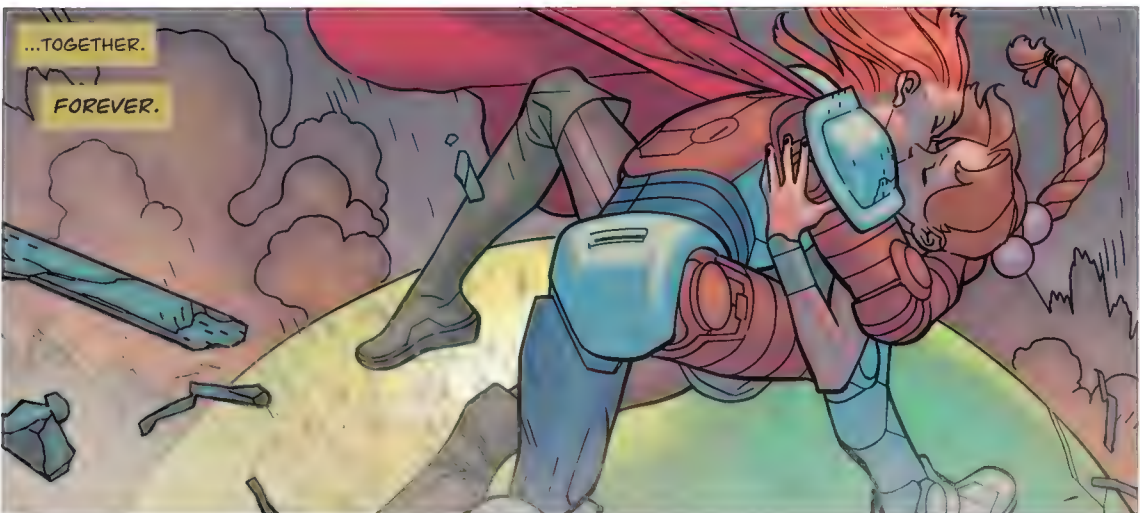


THE BATTLE WAS EASILY
WON, THE FLAXAN ARMIES
DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE.

THE WAR WAS
NEARING ITS
END.



BECAUSE WE WERE FIGHTING
FOR THE LIFE WE'D BUILT,
THERE, IN THAT WORLD. A LIFE
WE HAD NO INTENTION OF
EVER LEAVING... A LIFE
WE WOULD LIVE...



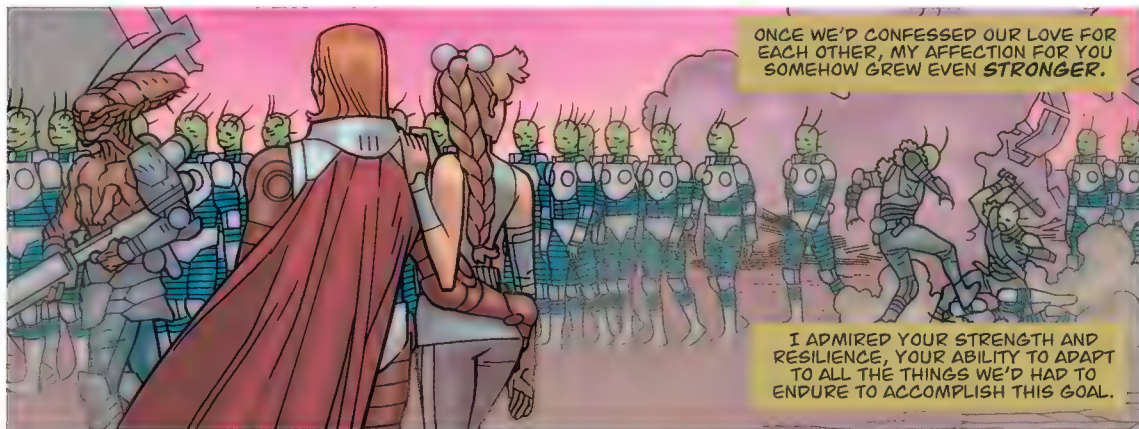
...TOGETHER.

FOREVER.



THE WAR
WAS OVER.

ALL THE SLAVE RACES WERE
ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THEIR
HOME DIMENSIONS. MOST
CHOSE NOT TO, AS THEY'D BEEN
HERE FOR GENERATIONS.



ONCE WE'D CONFESSED OUR LOVE FOR
EACH OTHER, MY AFFECTION FOR YOU
SOMEHOW GREW EVEN **STRONGER**.

I ADMIRERD YOUR STRENGTH AND
RESILIENCE, YOUR ABILITY TO ADAPT
TO ALL THE THINGS WE'D HAD TO
ENDURE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL.



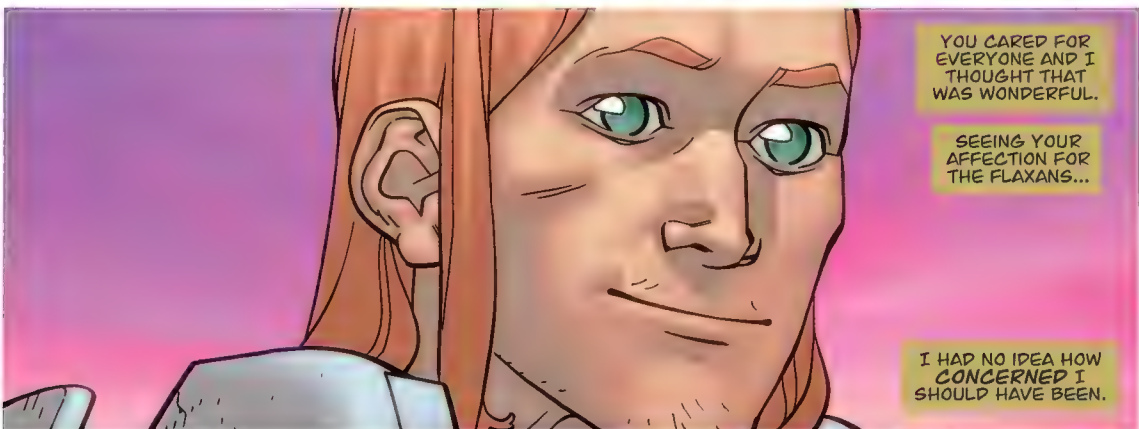
YOUR COMPASSION
MOVED ME.

YOU CARED FOR
ALL PEOPLE, EVEN
OUR ENEMIES.



IT WAS
EXTRAORDINARY.

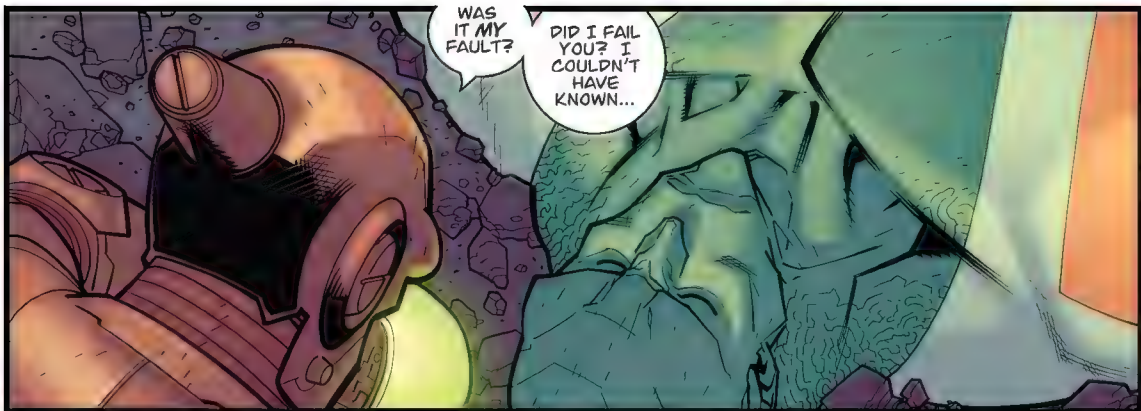
I FELT DEEPER
IN LOVE WITH YOU
IN EVERY MOMENT.



YOU CARED FOR
EVERYONE AND I
THOUGHT THAT
WAS WONDERFUL.

SEEING YOUR
AFFECTION FOR
THE FLAXANS...

I HAD NO IDEA HOW
CONCERNED I
SHOULD HAVE BEEN.

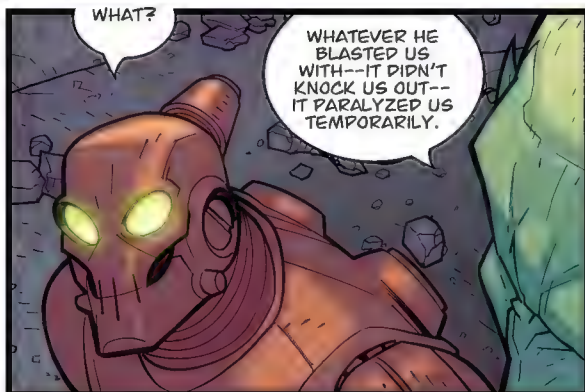




GOOD TIMING.
I'M STRETCHED
A LITTLE THIN.
LOTS OF
DRONES IN
ACTION.

MUST
HAVE GOTTEN
Distracted.

I WASN'T
UNCONSCIOUS.



WHAT?

WHATEVER HE
BLASTED US
WITH--IT DIDN'T
KNOCK US OUT--
IT PARALYZED US
TEMPORARILY.



I HEARD
EVERYTHING
YOU SAID.



AT LONG LAST
I AM FACE TO
FACE WITH
YOU--!

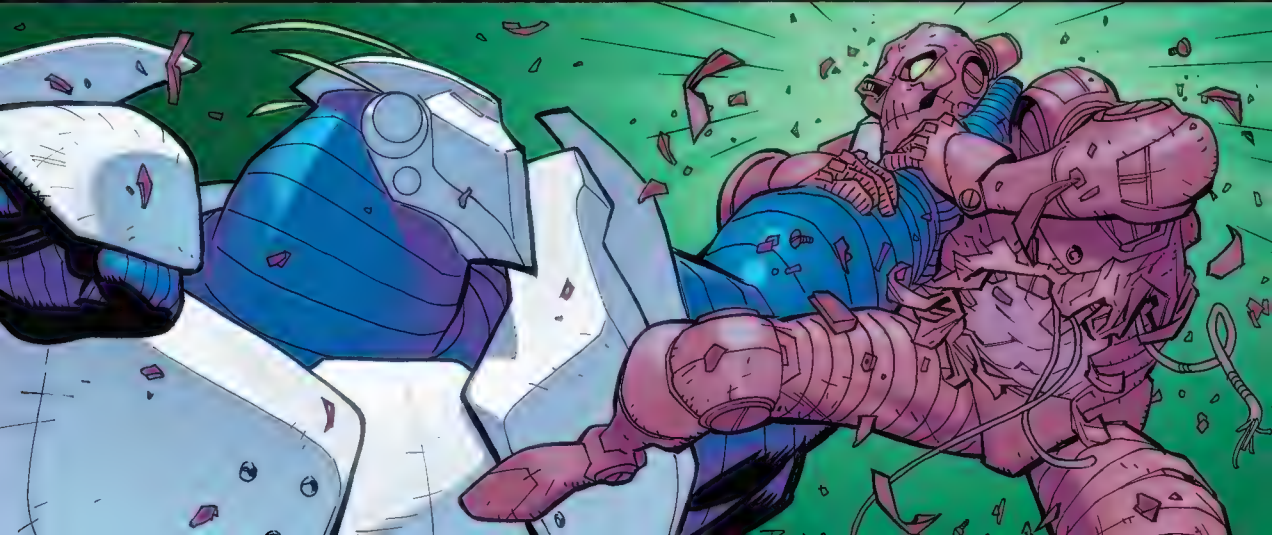
LOOK UPON
ME, REX ROBOT
AND AMANDA
MONSTER GIRL.
I AM LIVING PROOF
THAT YOUR WORK
TO DESTROY MY
PEOPLE HAS
FAILED.

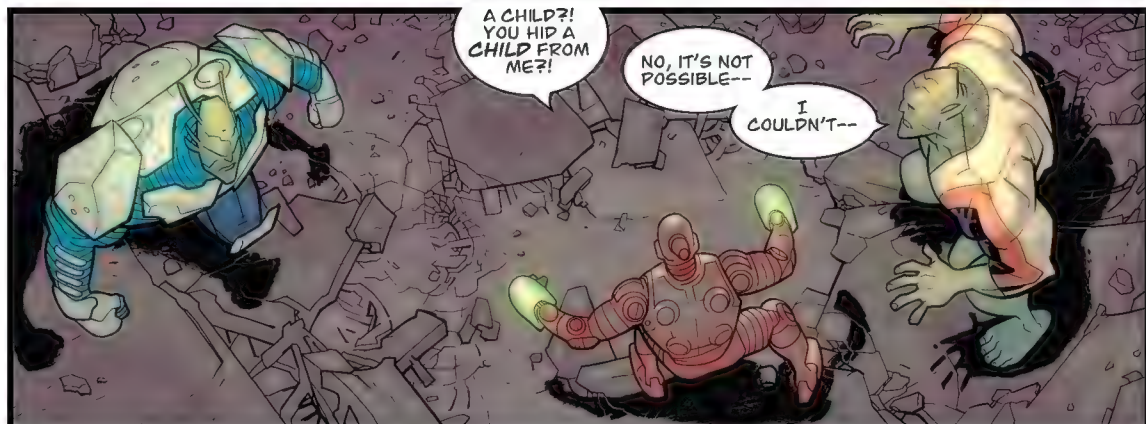
THAT'S
RIGHT... I
SPEAK YOUR
LANGUAGE,
TOO.





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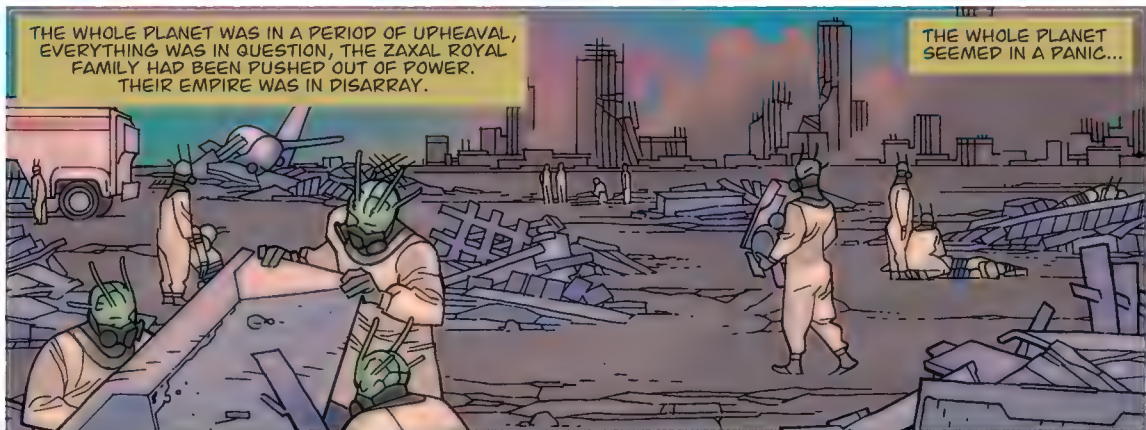






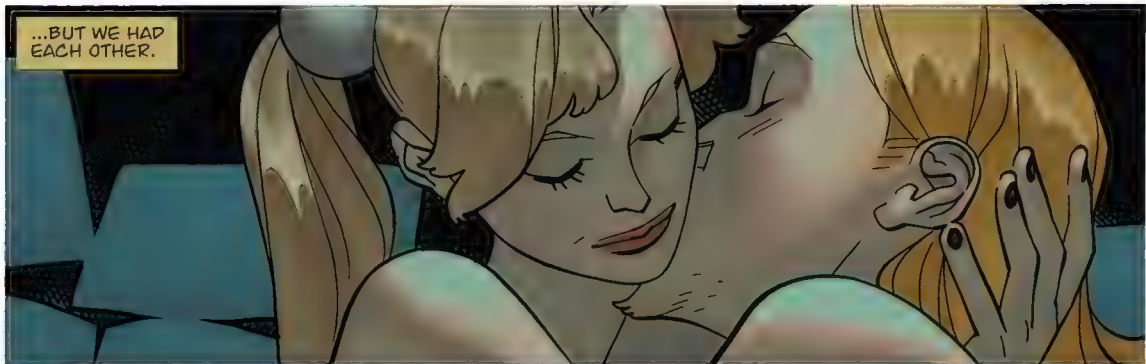
DEAREST AMANDA, I
REMEMBER THE DAYS
FOLLOWING THE END
OF THE GREAT WAR OF
INDEPENDENCE...

...HOW HAPPY
WE WERE.



THE WHOLE PLANET WAS IN A PERIOD OF UPHEAVAL,
EVERYTHING WAS IN QUESTION, THE ZAXAL ROYAL
FAMILY HAD BEEN PUSHED OUT OF POWER.
THEIR EMPIRE WAS IN DISARRAY.

THE WHOLE PLANET
SEEMED IN A PANIC...



...BUT WE HAD
EACH OTHER.



WHEN THE DECISION
WAS MADE THAT I
WAS THE ONE MOST FIT
TO ASSUME COMMAND...
TO RULE... I ACCEPTED.

BECAUSE I KNEW I COULD
USE THAT POSITION TO
INFLUENCE THIS WORLD EVEN
FURTHER... TO NEVER RETURN
TO ITS OLD WAYS... TO
NEVER INVADE EARTH...

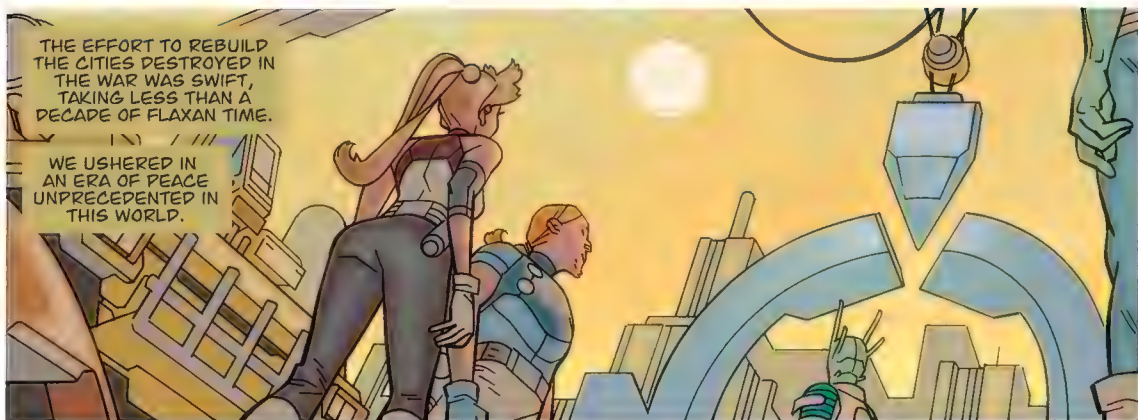
...AND ABOVE ALL
ELSE, I KNEW
THAT NO MATTER
WHAT...





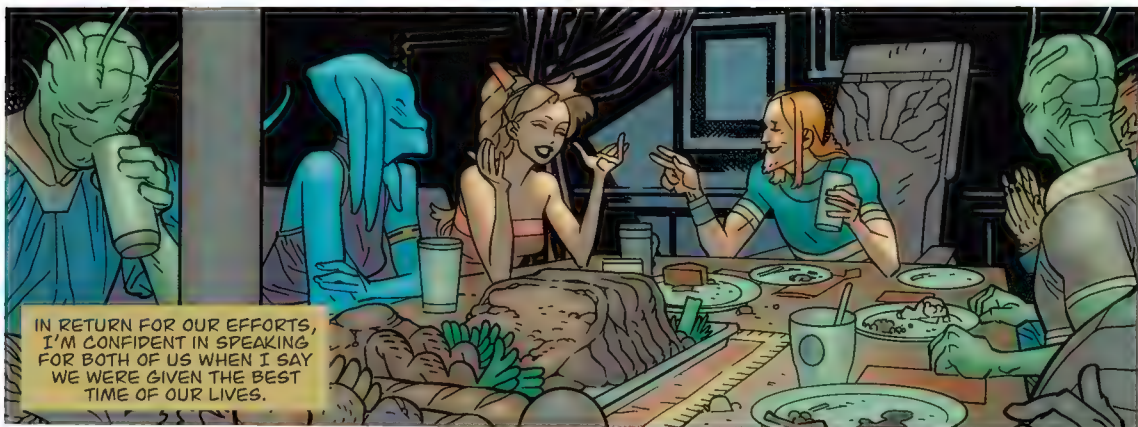
I RECALL HOW QUICKLY ALL
FLAXAN PEOPLE, EVEN THE
MILITARY WHO OPPOSED US,
BEGAN TO RALLY BEHIND US.

THE SUPPORT WAS
OVERWHELMING.

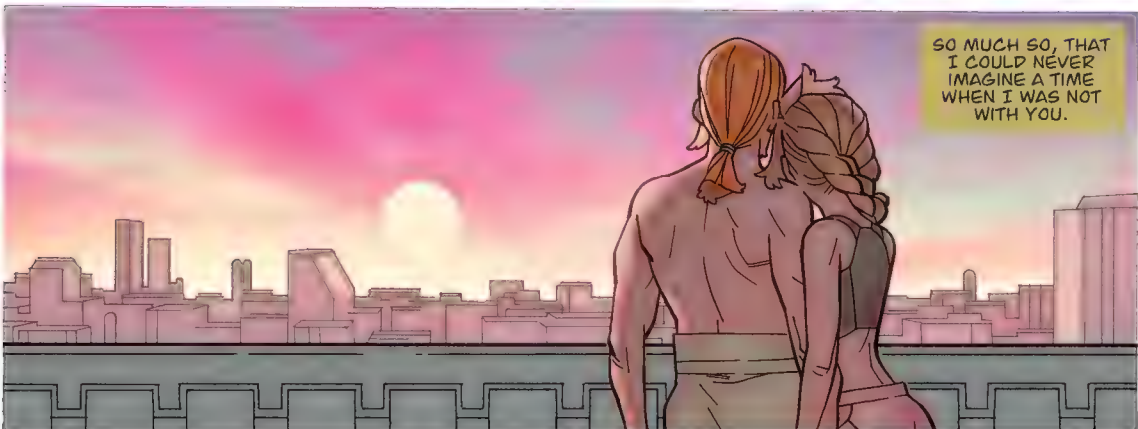


THE EFFORT TO REBUILD
THE CITIES DESTROYED IN
THE WAR WAS SWIFT,
TAKING LESS THAN A
DECADE OF FLAXAN TIME.

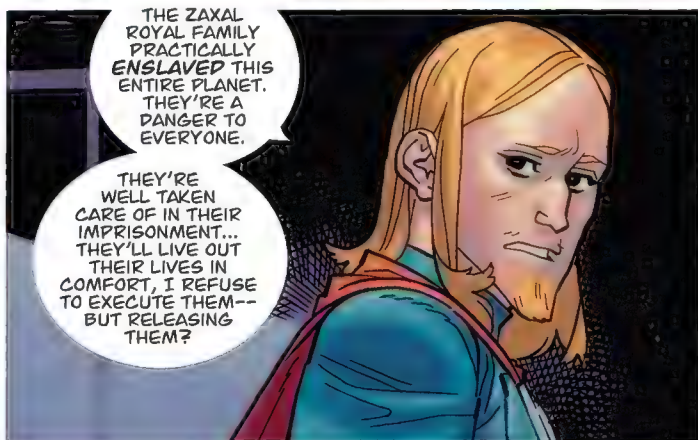
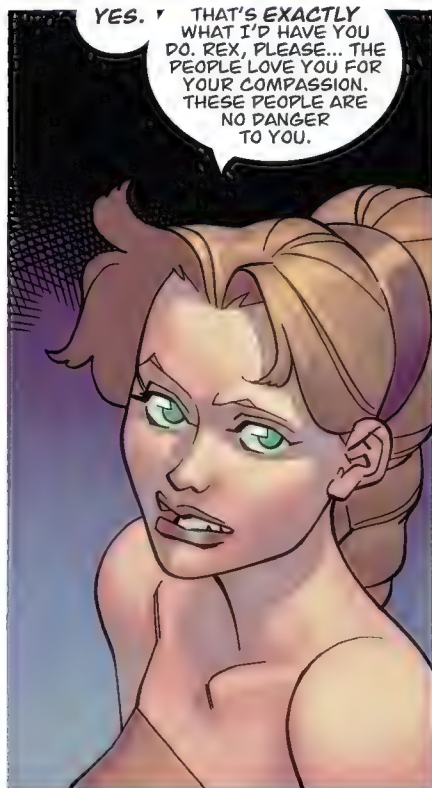
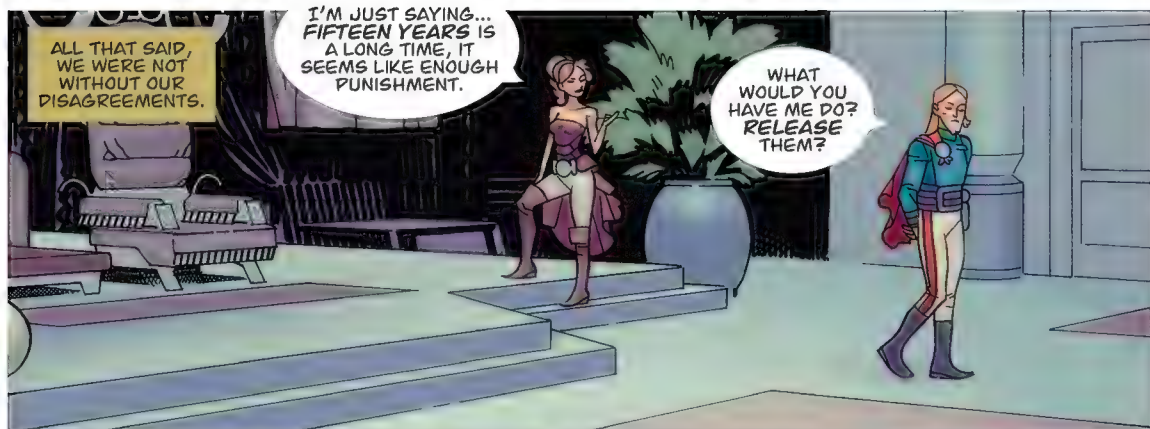
WE USHERED IN
AN ERA OF PEACE
UNPRECEDENTED IN
THIS WORLD.



IN RETURN FOR OUR EFFORTS,
I'M CONFIDENT IN SPEAKING
FOR BOTH OF US WHEN I SAY
WE WERE GIVEN THE BEST
TIME OF OUR LIVES.



SO MUCH SO, THAT
I COULD NEVER
IMAGINE A TIME
WHEN I WAS NOT
WITH YOU.





OVER THE YEARS,
I BECAME
DISTRACTED.

MAN, I SWEAR,
IF I DIDN'T HAVE
HUNDREDS OF YEARS
TO GET USED TO
THESE THINGS, I
DON'T KNOW WHAT
I'D DO.

I MEAN,
I SPENT
SO LONG AS A
SKINNY BEANPOLE...
I DON'T EVEN... I
NEVER THOUGHT
THIS WAS IN MY
FUTURE.

HM.



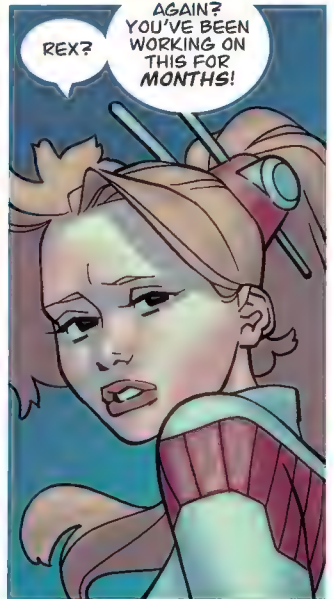
I MEAN... YOU HIT THE JACKPOT,
RIGHT? FALLING IN LOVE WITH
ME FOR MY MIND, AND
WINNING PERSONALITY...
AND GETTING...

...THIS.



THE FINANCIAL MARKETS ARE
STILL LARGELY DEPENDENT ON
OFF-WORLD IMPORTS. WE
HAVEN'T SUFFICIENTLY
SUPPLEMENTED THE LOSS
OF THAT IN THE ECONOMY
IN THE LAST SIXTY
YEARS.

MEASURES
WILL NEED
TO BE TAKEN
TO PREVENT A
SUBSTANTIAL
ECONOMIC
DOWNTURN...



REX?

AGAIN?
YOU'VE BEEN
WORKING ON
THIS FOR
MONTHS!



I KNOW, AMANDA, I'M SORRY.
AS RECONSTRUCTION AND
IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS
WORLDWIDE SLOW DOWN,
WE'RE SEEING A
REAL PROBLEM
EMERGE.

MAINTAINING OUR
NEW CITIES IS NOT
PROVIDING ENOUGH
WORK FOR THE
BOOMING POPULATION
IN PEACE TIME. IT'S
A REAL--



I KNOW...
I'M SORRY.
I KNOW.

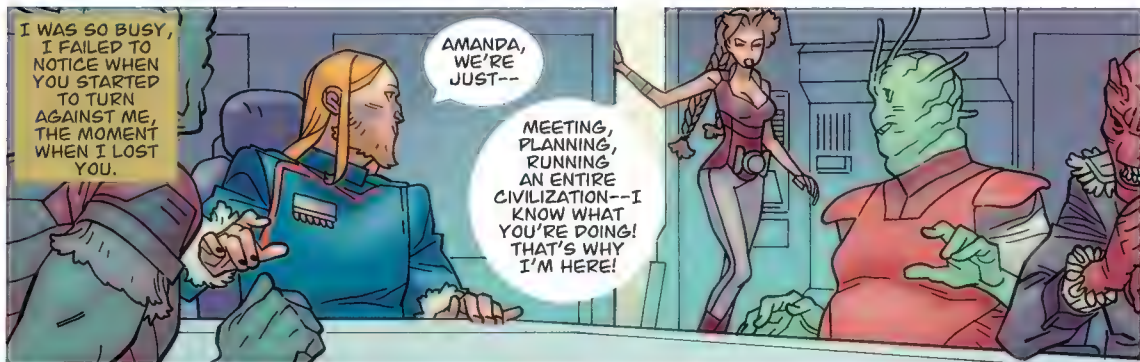
I DON'T KNOW
HOW I'VE BEEN
UNABLE TO FIND THE
TIME TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT ECONOMICS,
OR POPULATION
MANAGEMENT--
OR EVEN THE FLAXAN
LANGUAGE OVER THE
CENTURIES... I
WISH I COULD
HELP, AND I...

...I'LL
LEAVE YOU
TO IT.



THERE WAS A LOT GOING
ON AND I THOUGHT WE
HAD ALL THE TIME IN
THE WORLD.

I REALIZE NOW
I SHOULD HAVE
MADE MORE
TIME FOR YOU.



I WAS SO BUSY, I FAILED TO NOTICE WHEN YOU STARTED TO TURN AGAINST ME, THE MOMENT WHEN I LOST YOU.

AMANDA, WE'RE JUST--

MEETING, PLANNING, RUNNING AN ENTIRE CIVILIZATION--I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING! THAT'S WHY I'M HERE!

WHY DID YOU NEVER TELL ME ABOUT THE ZAXAL WORK CLASSIFICATION ACT?! I KNOW, I DON'T KNOW THE LANGUAGE, I'VE TRIED TO LEARN THE LANGUAGE... BUT THAT DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO KEEP THINGS FROM ME!

DESCENDANTS OF THE ZAXAL ROYAL FAMILY AND THEIR ALLIES ARE RESTRICTED ACCESS TO CITY CENTERS?! HOW IS THAT REMOTELY HUMANE?!

DO YOU KNOW THEY WORK IN THE MINES OF THE WASTELAND TO EARN A LIVING WAGE? THEIR CHILDREN GROW UP IN TENT CITIES! HOW HAVE YOU ALLOWED THIS TO GO ON?!



(PLEASE EXCUSE ME.)

WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD IS AN EXAGGERATION.



THEY'RE KEPT FROM THE GENERAL POPULATION FOR **SECURITY** REASONS. YOU REMEMBER THE YEARS AFTER THE WAR--HOW MANY ZAXALS WERE EXECUTED IN THE STREETS.

I COULD THINK OF NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE, IT'S FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY.

THEIR LIVING CONDITIONS ARE ADEQUATE. THE WASTELAND HAS CHANGED A GREAT DEAL OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES, DUE IN LARGE PART TO THEIR SETTLEMENT OF THE AREA.



WHY HAVEN'T WE BEEN COMBATING THIS WITH EDUCATION AND BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY?

WHEN DID YOU **GIVE UP** ON INTEGRATING THEM INTO SOCIETY?!



HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE--WHAT'S AT STAKE? THERE ARE MANY WHO WOULD PREFER THINGS TO BE AS THEY WERE UNDER THE ZAXALS.

I HAVE TO OPPOSE RADICAL POLITICAL FACTIONS EVERY ELECTION--SOME HAVE EVEN PROPOSED A RETURN OF SLAVERY.

THEY'RE THE GRANDCHILDREN OF OUR ENEMY AT THIS POINT... BUT THEY'RE STILL DANGEROUS.



I PUSHED YOU AWAY WHEN I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT YOU IN, EXPLAINED THINGS BETTER... SHOWN YOU WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR WHAT CAME NEXT.
I GAVE YOU NO CHOICE.

YOU WERE ONLY DOING WHAT
YOU THOUGHT WAS RIGHT...
SAVING PEOPLE... HELPING THE
WEAK... LIKE WE'D DONE SO
LONG AGO, ON EARTH.

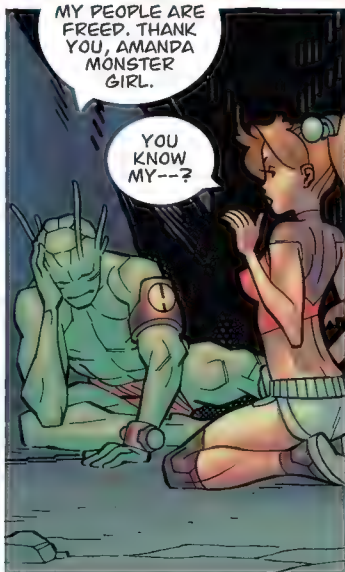
IF YOU
WANT TO BEAT
SOMEONE--

--BEAT
ME!



MY PEOPLE ARE
FREED. THANK
YOU, AMANDA
MONSTER
GIRL.

YOU
KNOW
MY--?



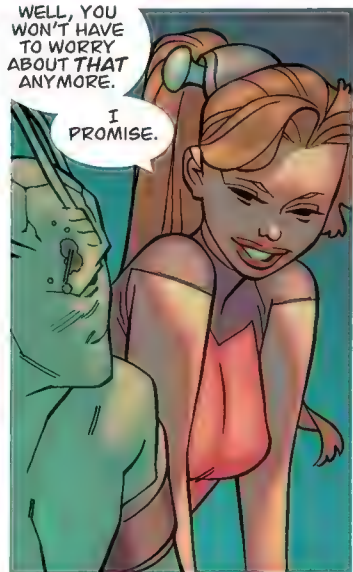
YOUR LANGUAGE WAS USED
AS CODE IN THE WAR. MY
PEOPLE CRACKED IT AND
WE'VE TAUGHT OUR
CHILDREN FOR
GENERATIONS.

WE USE IT
IN THE MINES
SO THE
BOSSES WON'T
UNDERSTAND
US.



WELL, YOU
WON'T HAVE
TO WORRY
ABOUT THAT
ANYMORE.

I
PROMISE.



YOU MADE THEM SECOND CLASS CITIZENS, REX! PEOPLE ARE PUNISHED FOR GIVING THEM WORK-- THEY CAN'T FEED THEIR YOUNG!

THE MINES WERE THEIR ONLY MEANS OF SUPPORTING THEMSELVES-- AND THE BOSSES KNEW THAT. THEY WERE ESSENTIALLY SLAVES!

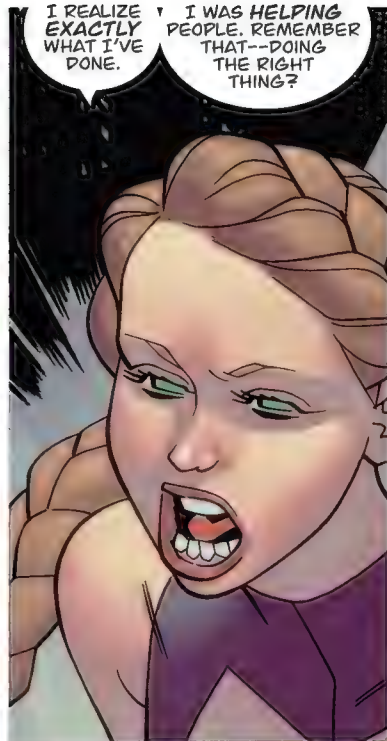


YOU DON'T EVEN REALIZE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?



I REALIZE EXACTLY WHAT I'VE DONE.

I WAS HELPING PEOPLE. REMEMBER THAT--DOING THE RIGHT THING?



YOU UNDERMINED MY AUTHORITY!

DO YOU NOT SEE WHAT A DELICATE HOLD I HAVE ON THESE PEOPLE?! ALL OF THIS COULD COME CRASHING DOWN AROUND US AT ANY MINUTE!

IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO HOLD IT ALL TOGETHER! MINE! THAT WEIGHT RESTS ON MY SHOULDERS.

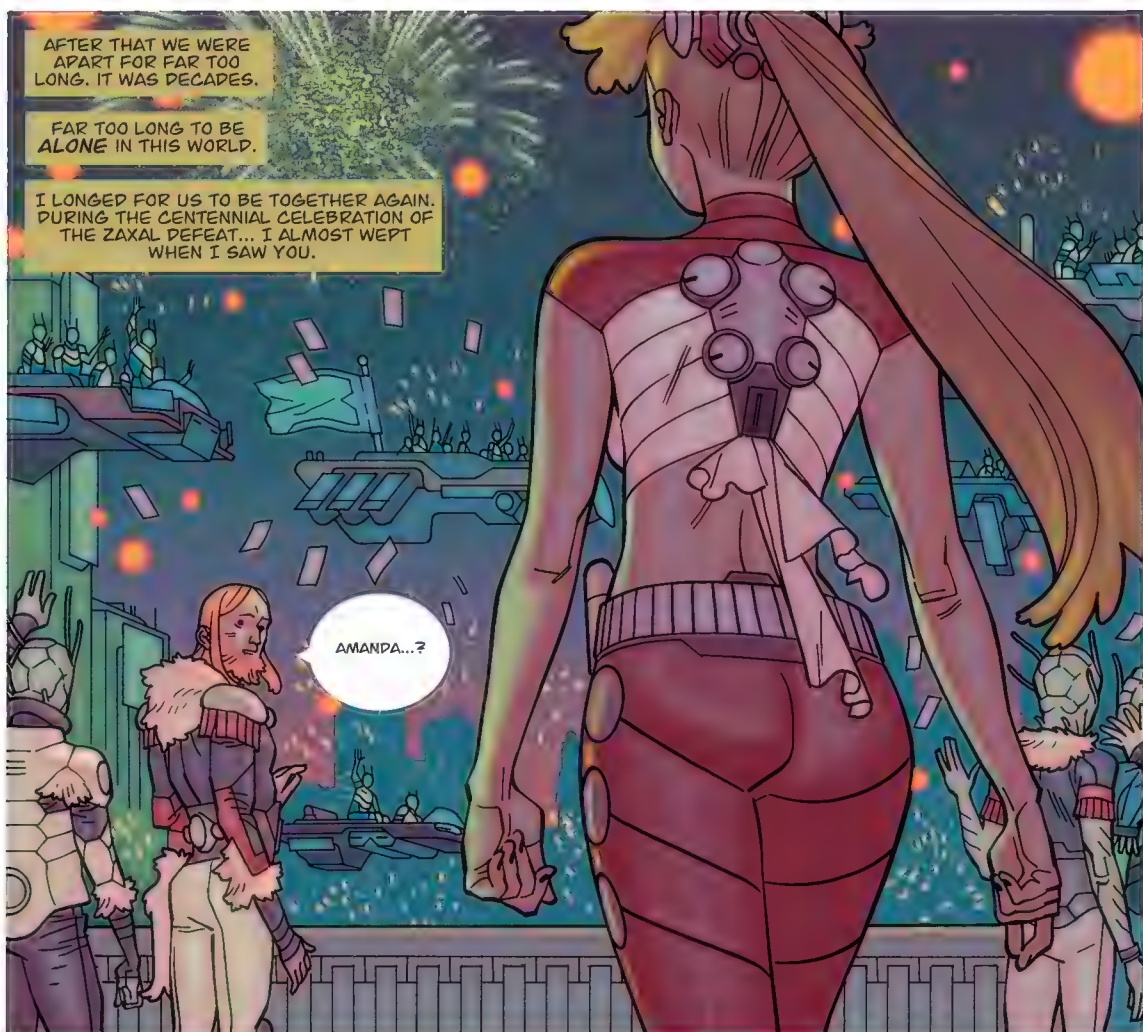
AND YOU ACTUALLY THINK YOU WERE HELPING?!



GET OUT OF MY SIGHT.

I AM SORRY THAT IT HAS TAKEN ME THIS LONG TO ADMIT THAT I WAS WRONG THAT DAY.





AFTER THAT WE WERE
APART FOR FAR TOO
LONG. IT WAS DECADES.

FAR TOO LONG TO BE
ALONE IN THIS WORLD.

I LONGED FOR US TO BE TOGETHER AGAIN.
DURING THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF
THE ZAXAL DEFEAT... I ALMOST WEPT
WHEN I SAW YOU.

AMANDA...?



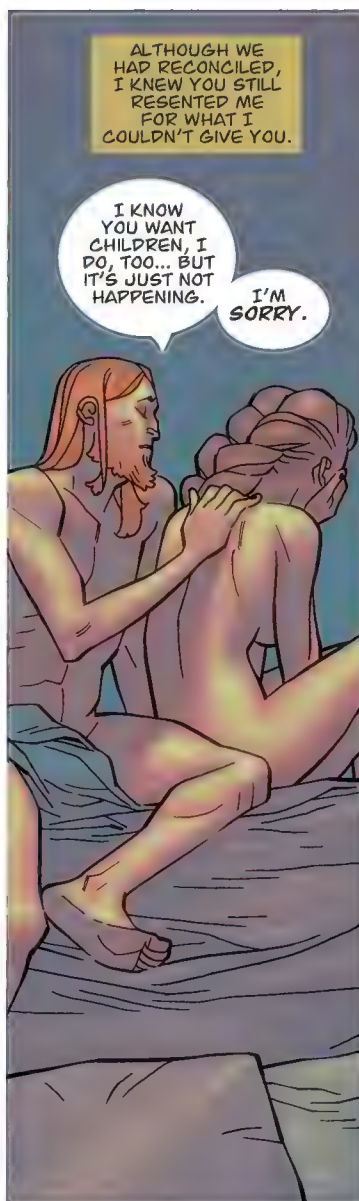
IT HAD BEEN SO LONG,
AND I COULD SEE YOU
MISSED ME AS MUCH
AS I HAD YOU...

I THOUGHT WE'D
PUT IT ALL BEHIND US.



DURING YOUR TIME AWAY, I NEVER KNEW WHERE YOU'D GONE---BUT NOW, IT'S CLEAR TO ME, YOU WERE WITH THE ZAXAL REFUGEES.

THEY'RE JUST **ADORABLE**. YOUR FATHER WOULD BE SO PROUD.



ALTHOUGH WE HAD RECONCILED, I KNEW YOU STILL RESENTED ME FOR WHAT I COULDN'T GIVE YOU.

I KNOW YOU WANT CHILDREN, I DO, TOO... BUT IT'S JUST NOT HAPPENING.

I'M SORRY.



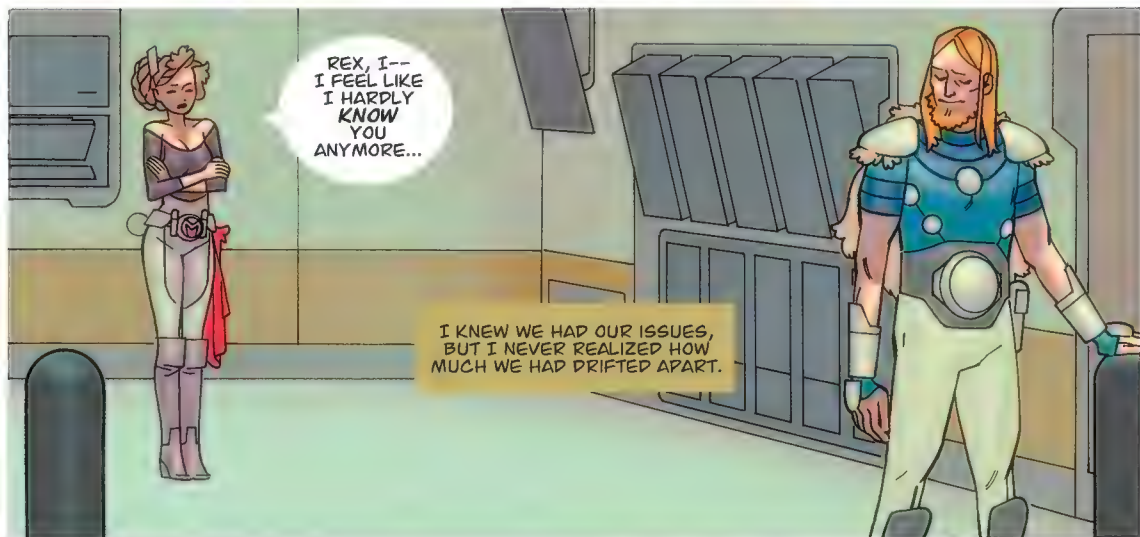
I'M WILLING TO ADMIT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN OTHER THINGS THAT DROVE A WEDGE BETWEEN US.

DON'T BE SO **NAIVE**! THAT WOULD NEVER WORK! IT WILL ONLY LEAD TO **MORE** PROBLEMS!

I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING! WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO QUESTION ME?!

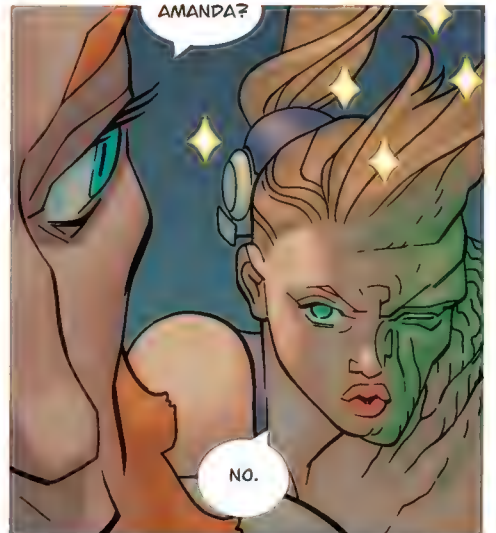
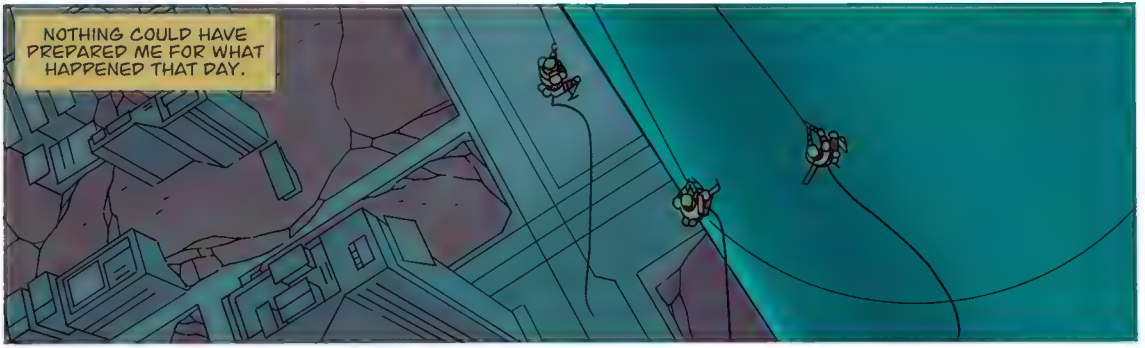
BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE **STARVING** AND **DYING** OUT THERE! BECAUSE YOUR WAY OF DOING THINGS ISN'T WORKING! THERE'S **PEACE**, **YES**---BUT OUR **RESOURCES** ARE LOW AND YOU DON'T SEEM TO **CARE**!

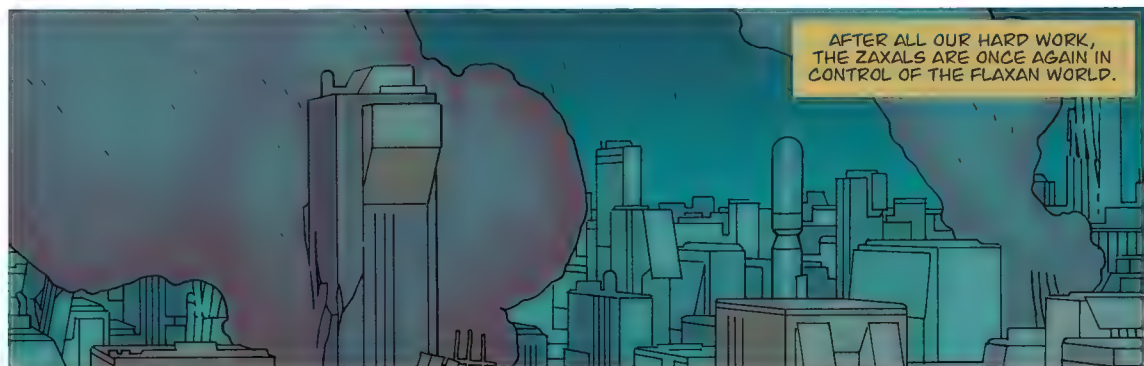
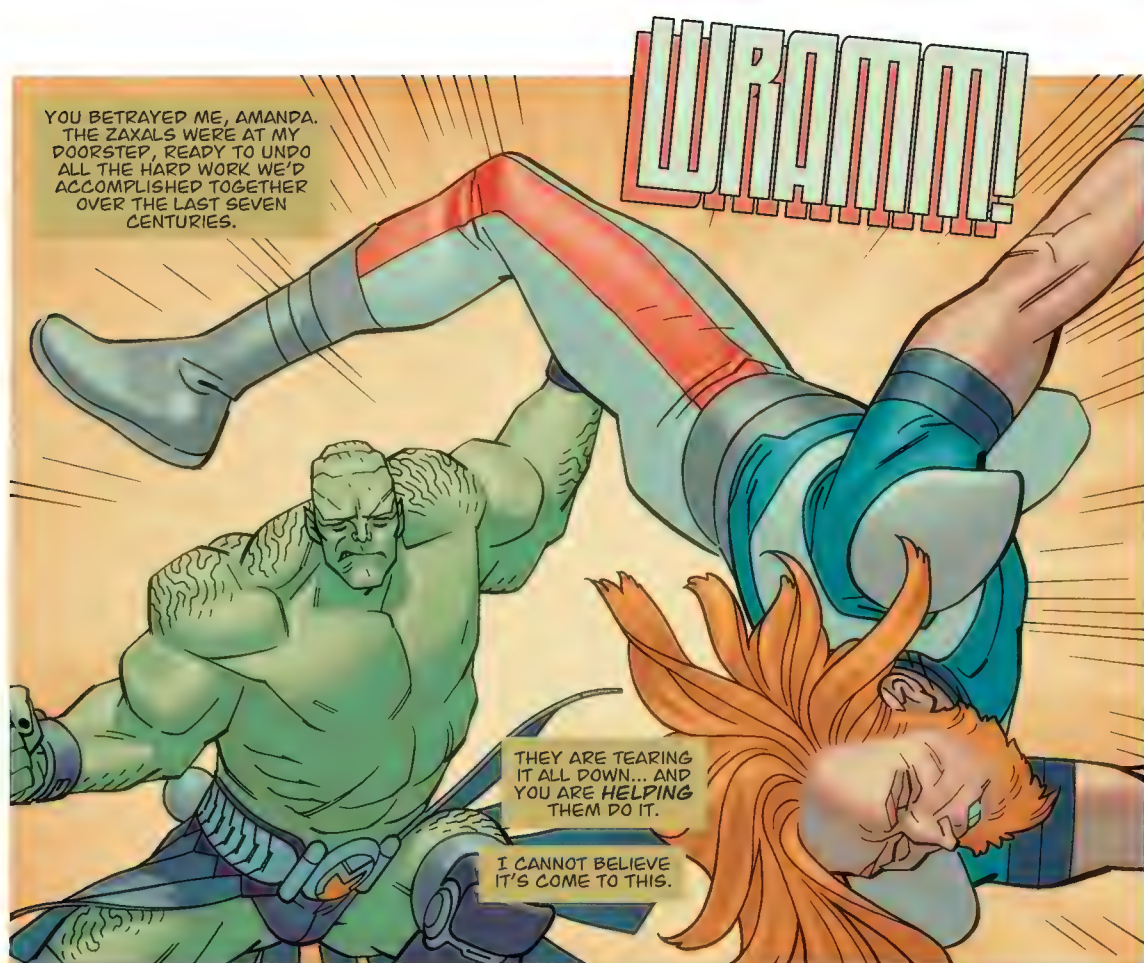
THE ZAXAL ROYAL FAMILY WENT ABOUT THINGS THE WRONG WAY, BUT THEY KNEW WE NEEDED RESOURCES FROM OTHER WORLDS TO SUSTAIN THIS POPULATION! WE DON'T HAVE TO GO TO WAR FOR IT---BUT THOSE PORTALS NEED TO BE USED! YOU ARE **LOSING** THE PEOPLE.

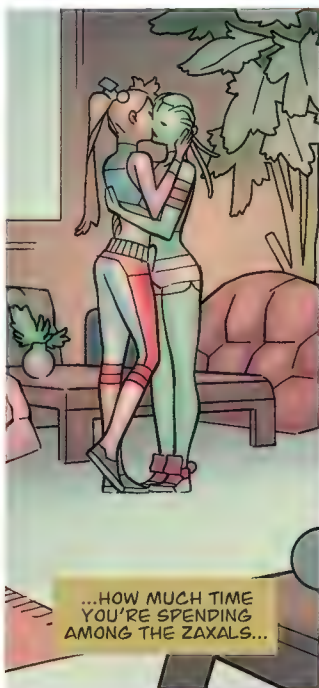
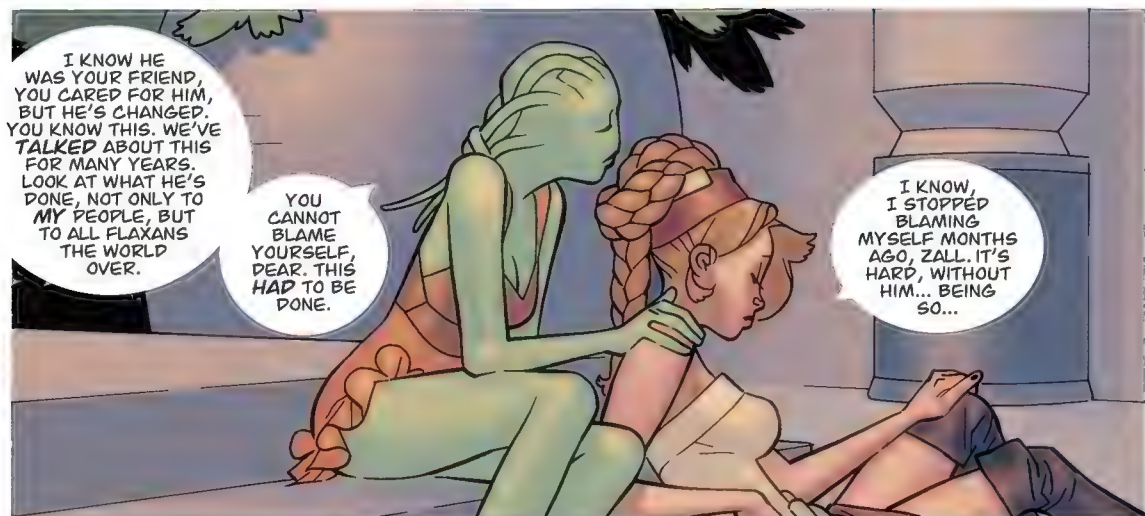
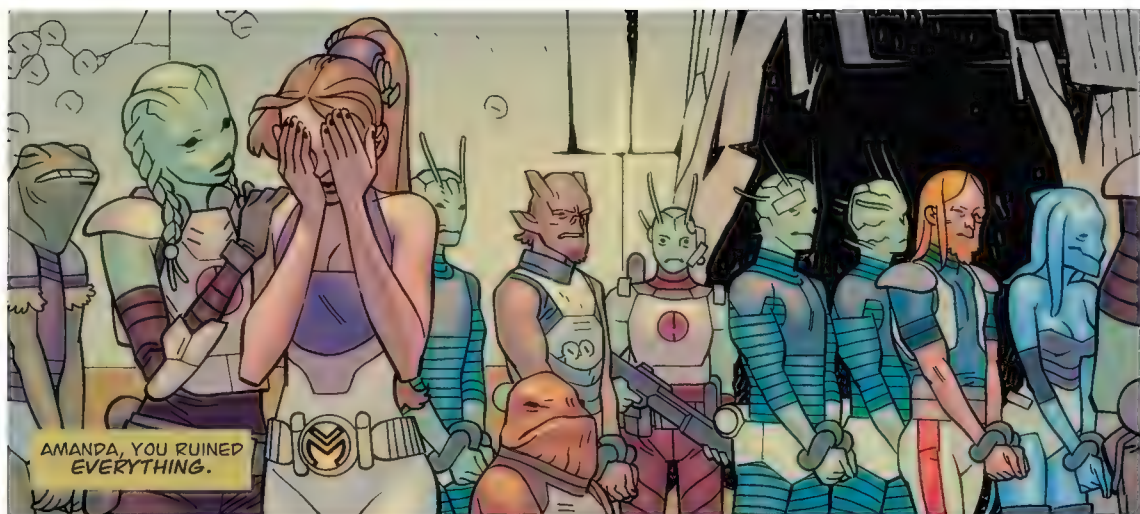


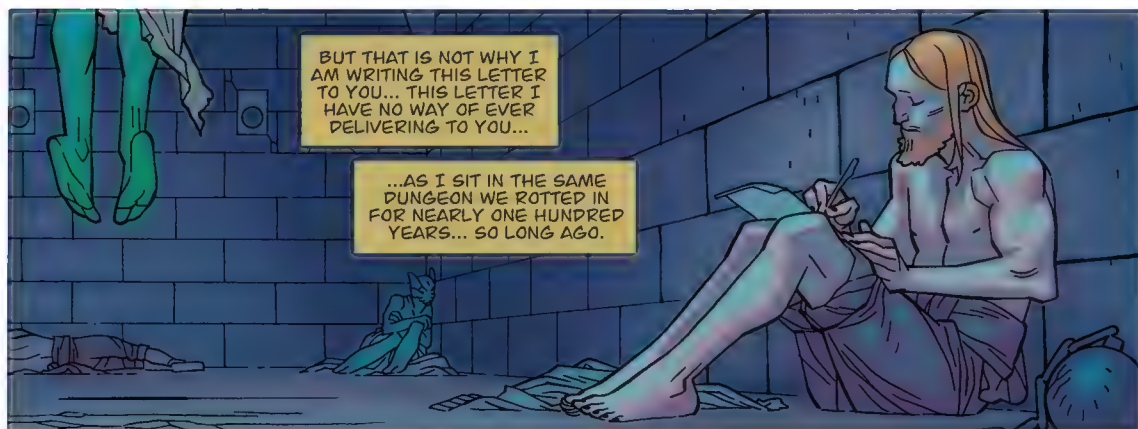
REX, I-- I FEEL LIKE I HARDLY KNOW YOU ANYMORE...

I KNEW WE HAD OUR ISSUES, BUT I NEVER REALIZED HOW MUCH WE HAD DRIFTED APART.



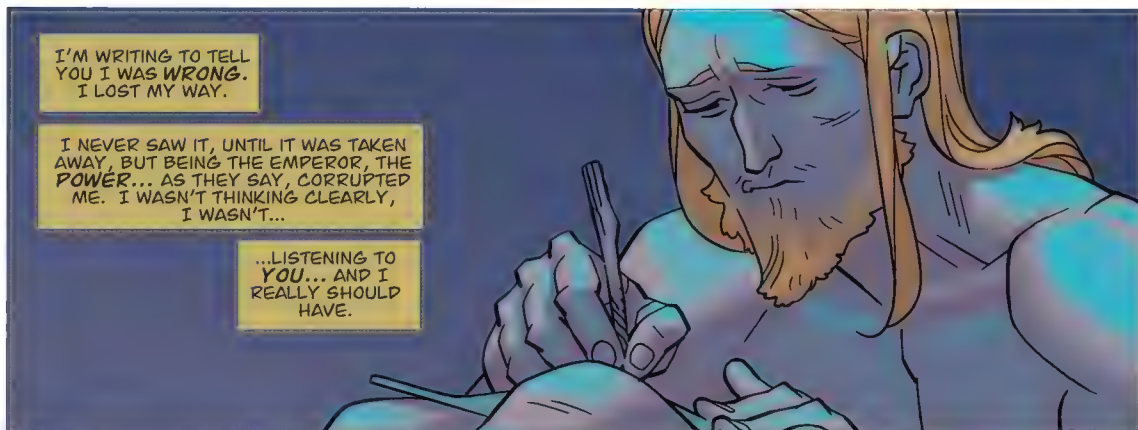






BUT THAT IS NOT WHY I AM WRITING THIS LETTER TO YOU... THIS LETTER I HAVE NO WAY OF EVER DELIVERING TO YOU...

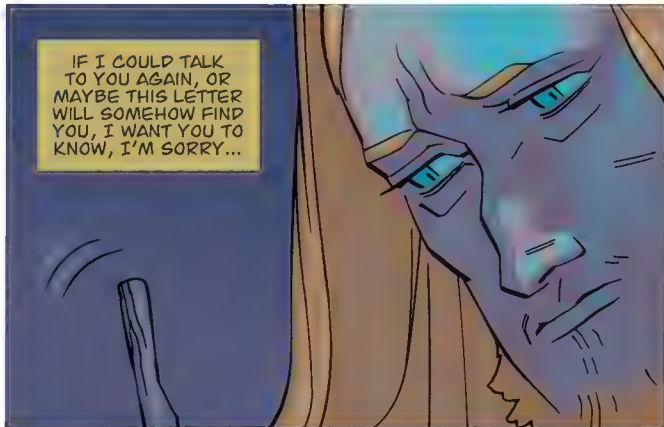
...AS I SIT IN THE SAME DUNGEON WE ROTTED IN FOR NEARLY ONE HUNDRED YEARS... SO LONG AGO.



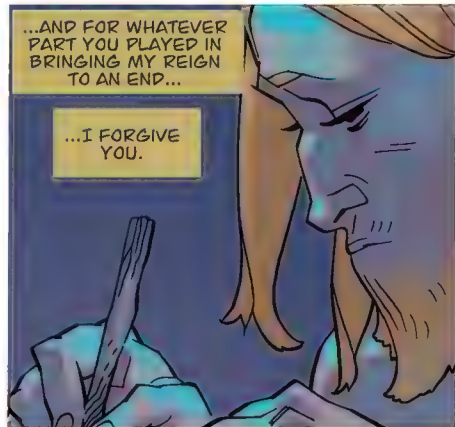
I'M WRITING TO TELL YOU I WAS **WRONG**. I LOST MY WAY.

I NEVER SAW IT, UNTIL IT WAS TAKEN AWAY, BUT BEING THE EMPEROR, THE **POWER**... AS THEY SAY, CORRUPTED ME. I WASN'T THINKING CLEARLY, I WASN'T...

...LISTENING TO **YOU**... AND I REALLY SHOULD HAVE.

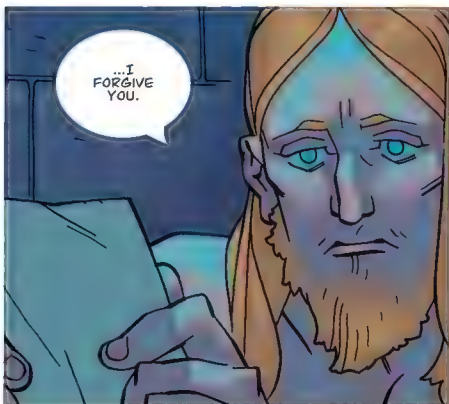


IF I COULD TALK TO YOU AGAIN, OR MAYBE THIS LETTER WILL SOMEHOW FIND YOU, I WANT YOU TO KNOW, I'M SORRY...

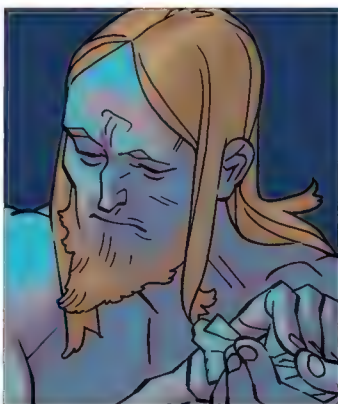


...AND FOR WHATEVER PART YOU PLAYED IN BRINGING MY REIGN TO AN END...

...I FORGIVE YOU.



...I FORGIVE YOU.





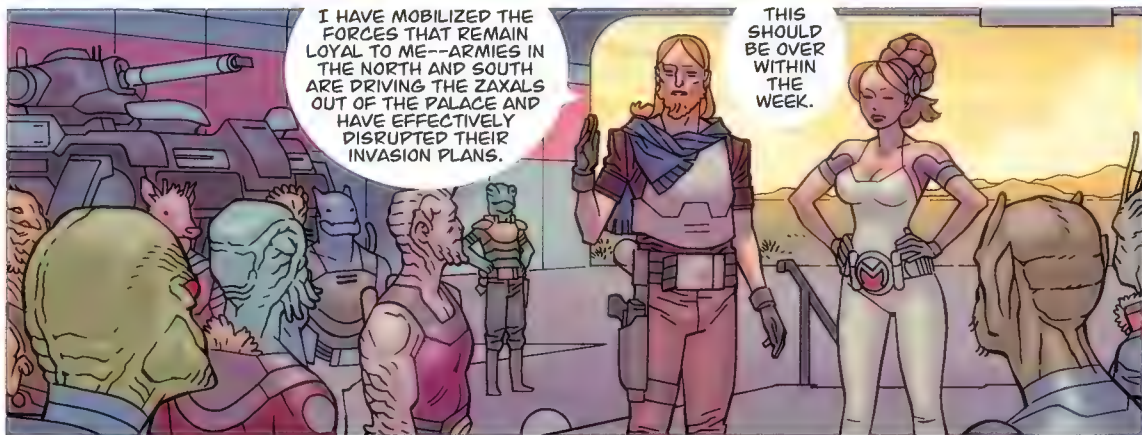
REX, YOU HAVE
TO HELP ME--YOU
WERE RIGHT ABOUT
THE ZAXALS! THEY'RE
MOUNTING AN ATTACK
ON ANOTHER
DIMENSION
RIGHT NOW!

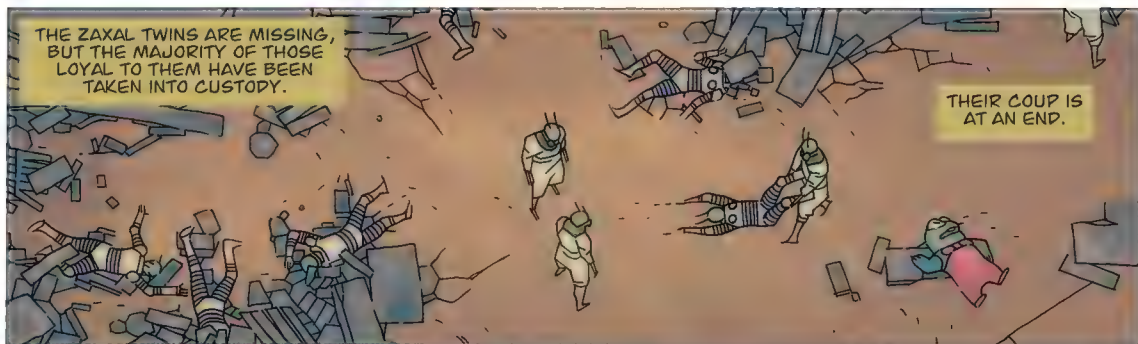
WE HAVE
TO **STOP**
THEM!



I HAVE MOBILIZED THE
FORCES THAT REMAIN
LOYAL TO ME--ARMIES IN
THE NORTH AND SOUTH
ARE DRIVING THE ZAXALS
OUT OF THE PALACE AND
HAVE EFFECTIVELY
DISRUPTED THEIR
INVASION PLANS.

THIS
SHOULD
BE OVER
WITHIN
THE WEEK.





THE ZAXAL TWINS ARE MISSING,
BUT THE MAJORITY OF THOSE
LOYAL TO THEM HAVE BEEN
TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.

THEIR COUP IS
AT AN END.

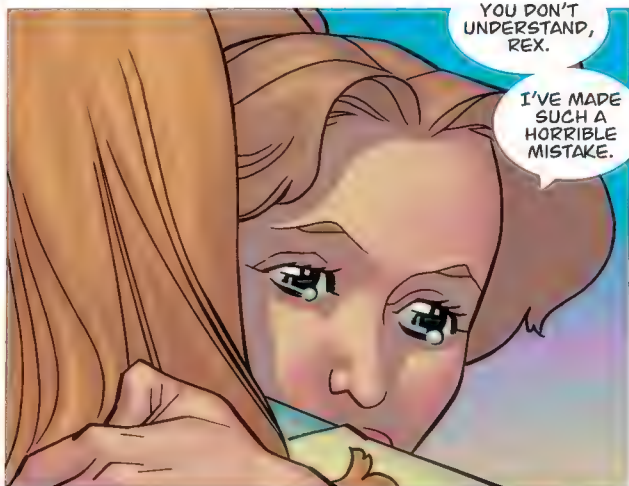


OH, REX...
I'M SORRY
FOR WHAT
I--

PLEASE,
SAY NO MORE.
YOU WERE RIGHT
ABOUT SO MANY THINGS.
I HAD TURNED MY
BACK ON THE PEOPLE...
I WAS SEEKING MORE
POWER AND NOT
USING IT
WISELY.

YOU WERE
RIGHT TO
OPPOSE ME,
AMANDA.
I SEE THAT
NOW.

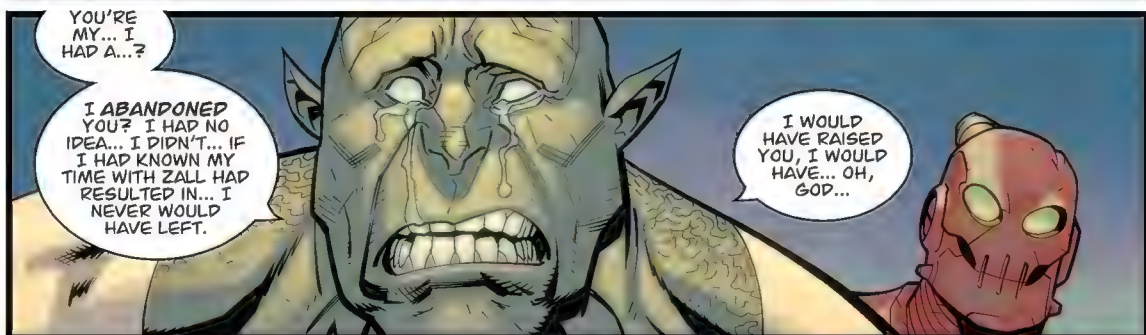
I WANT YOU
TO KNOW...
EVERYTHING WILL
BE DIFFERENT
NOW... BETTER,
YOU'LL SEE.



YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND,
REX.

I'VE MADE
SUCH A
HORRIBLE
MISTAKE.







HOW--
HOW
COULD
I--?

NO TIME
FOR THAT NOW,
AMANDA. WE'LL
SORT THIS OUT
LATER--FOR NOW,
HE JUST NEEDS
TO BE STOPPED.



DO NOT
UNDERESTIMATE
ME! I COMMAND
THE FLAXAN
LEGIONS--



--YOUR
END--YOUR
WORLD'S
END--WILL
BE SWIFT!



SOON I
WILL HAVE THE
OPPORTUNITY TO
DO WHAT YOU
DID--REBUILD
YOUR WORLD IN
MY IMAGE.

AND I'LL
KEEP YOU
BOTH ALIVE
LONG ENOUGH
TO WITNESS
THIS AND
DESPAIR.



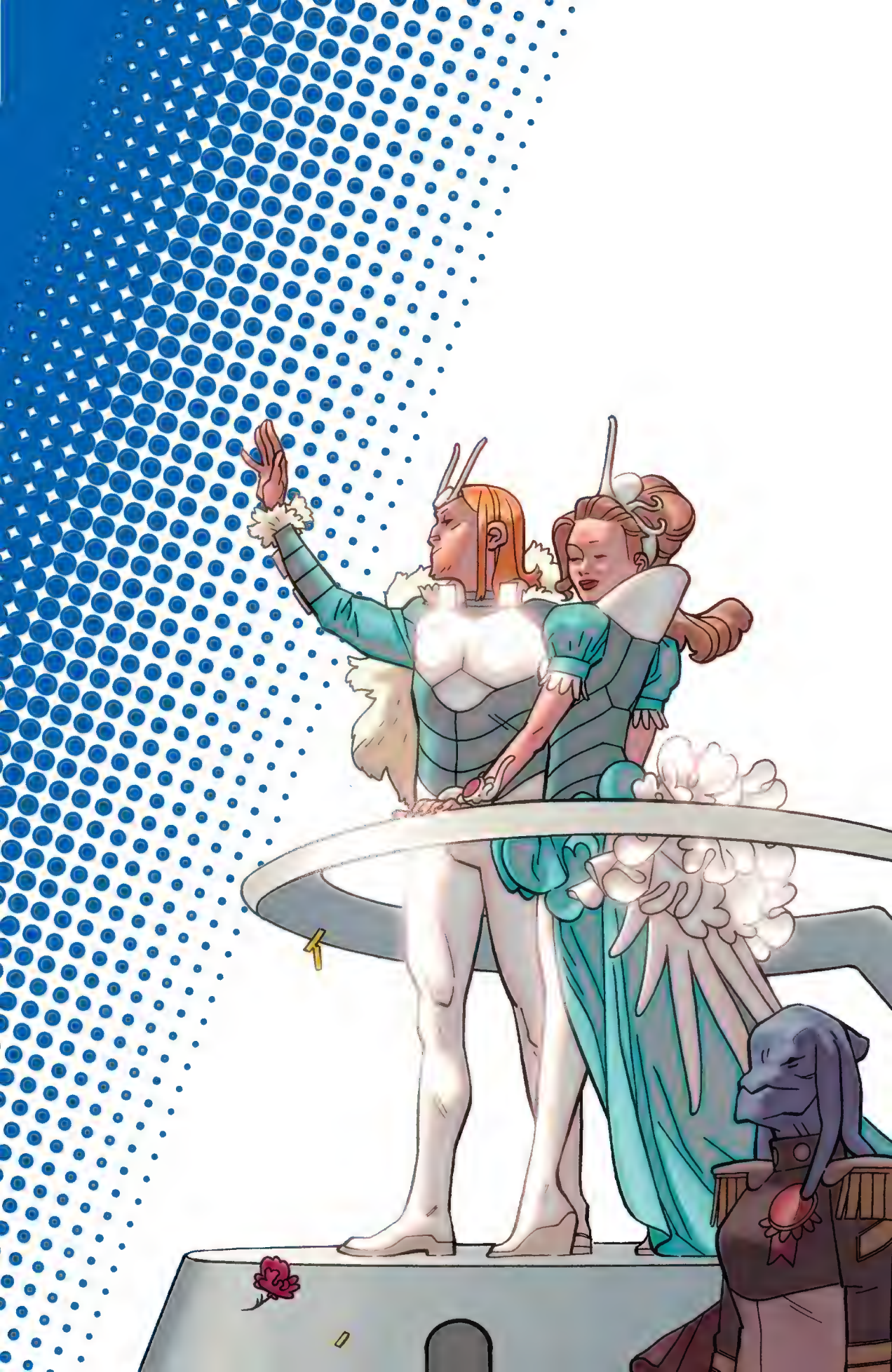
OR
NOT!

ON YOUR
FEET,
SOLDIER.

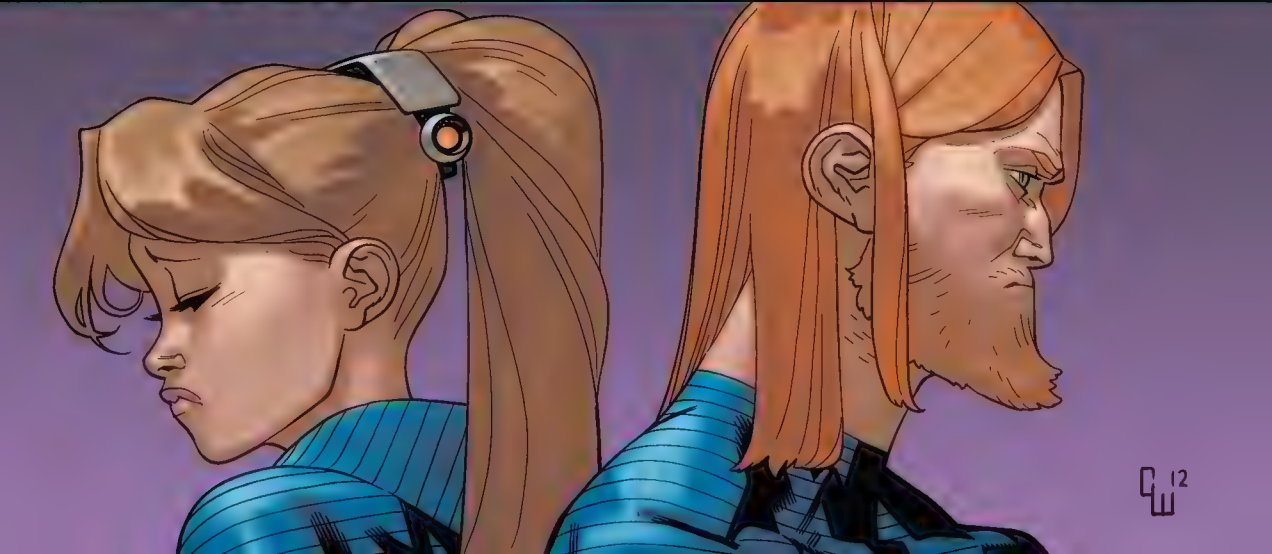
THE GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE ARE
BACK IN FULL FORCE,
AND WE'RE AT YOUR
COMMAND. YOU KNOW
THESE BASTARDS
BETTER THAN ANY
OF US...

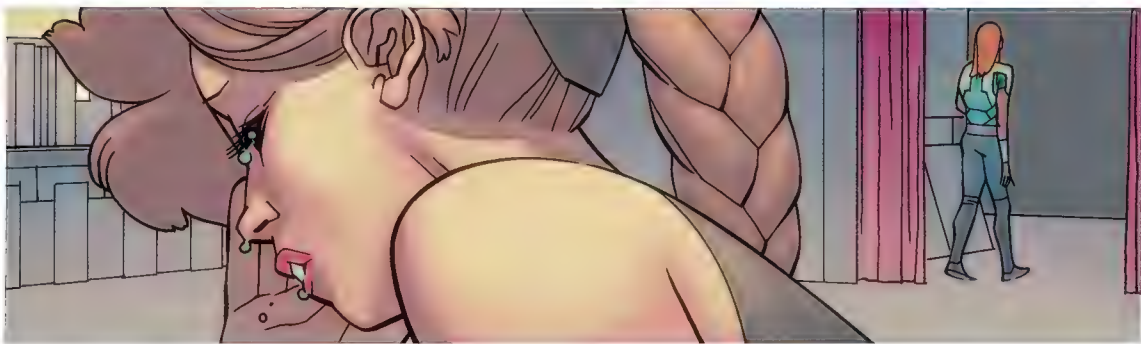
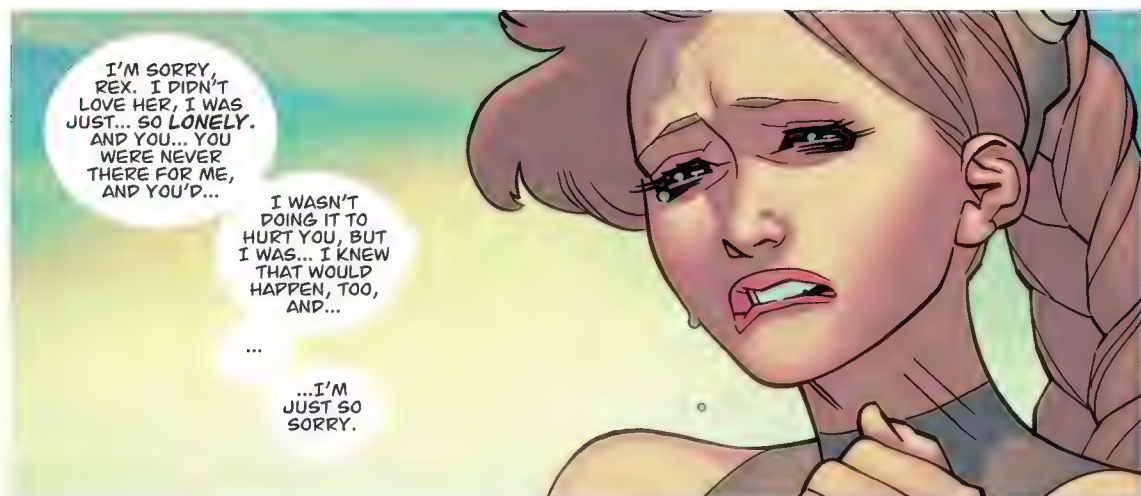
...AND I'M
WILLING TO BET,
GIVEN THE RIGHT
RESOURCES,
YOU KNOW
EXACTLY
HOW TO BEAT
THEM...

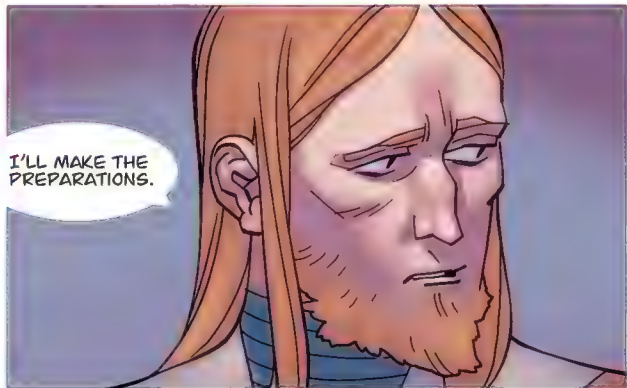
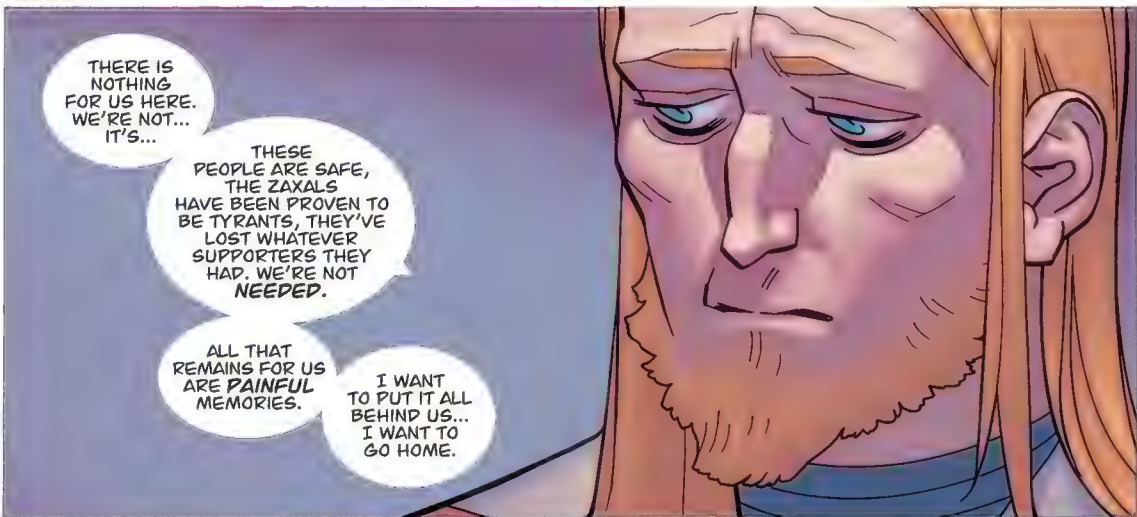
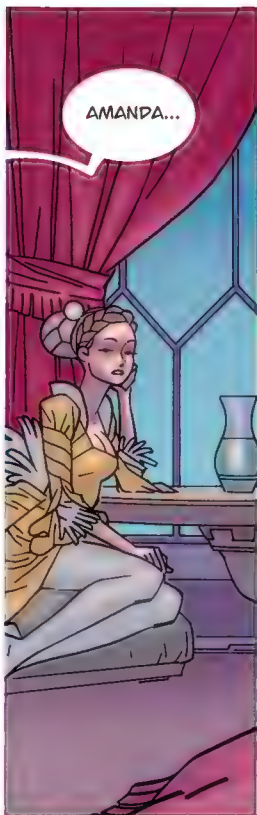
LET'S
FINISH
THIS!

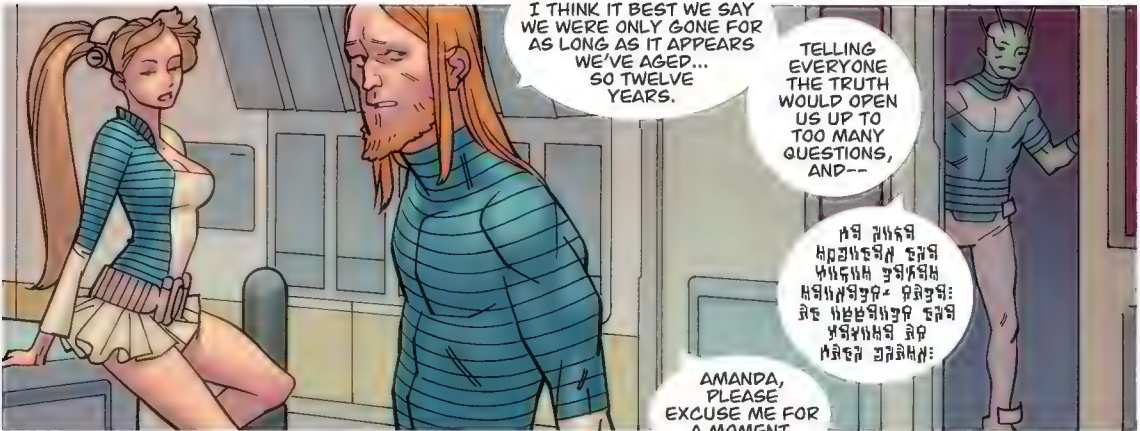


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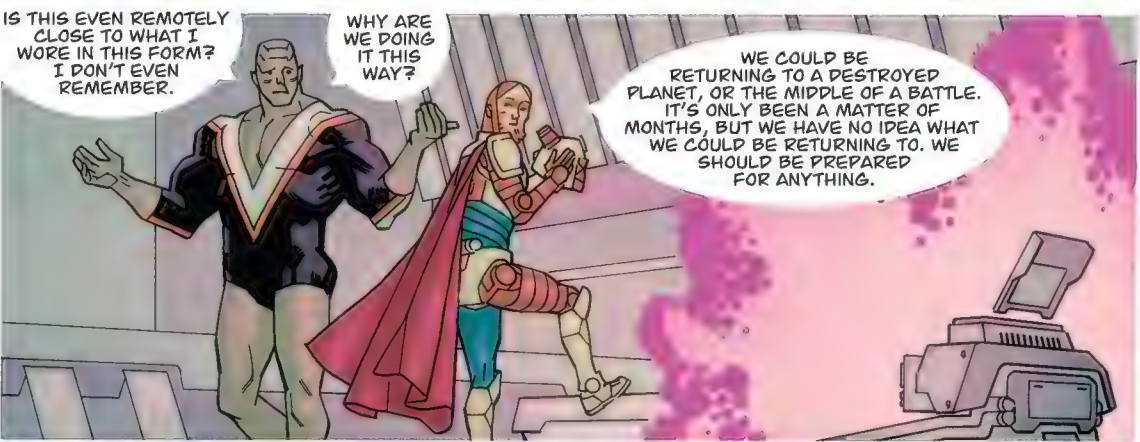


I THINK IT BEST WE SAY WE WERE ONLY GONE FOR AS LONG AS IT APPEARS WE'VE AGED... SO TWELVE YEARS.

TELLING EVERYONE THE TRUTH WOULD OPEN US UP TO TOO MANY QUESTIONS, AND--

အမှန်တရားကို
အားလုံးသိရန် နေရာ
အားလုံးသိရန် အားလုံးသိရန်
အားလုံးသိရန် အားလုံးသိရန်
အားလုံးသိရန် အားလုံးသိရန်
အားလုံးသိရန် အားလုံးသိရန်

AMANDA, PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT.



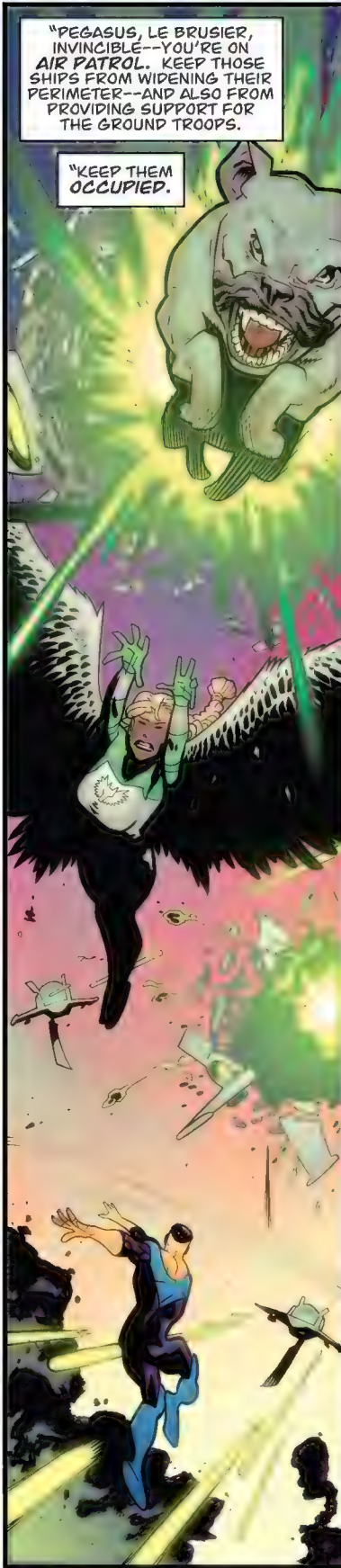
IS THIS EVEN REMOTELY CLOSE TO WHAT I WORE IN THIS FORM? I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER.

WHY ARE WE DOING IT THIS WAY?

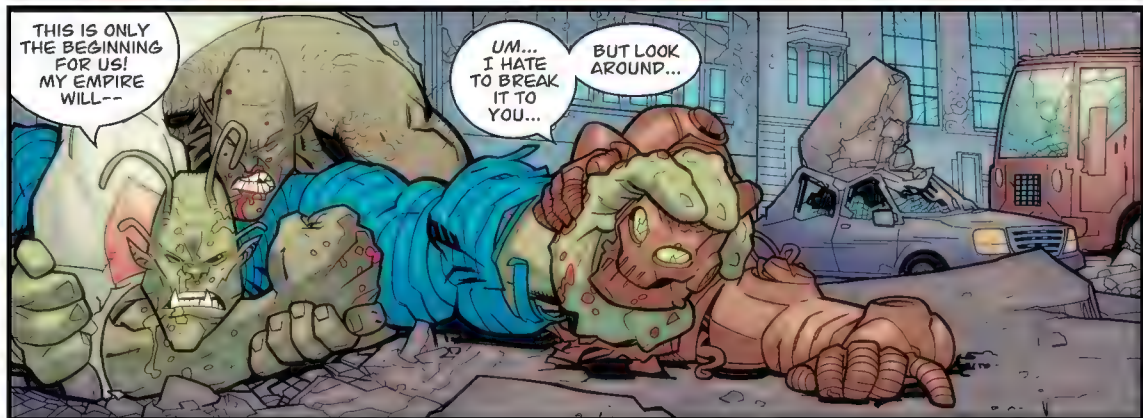
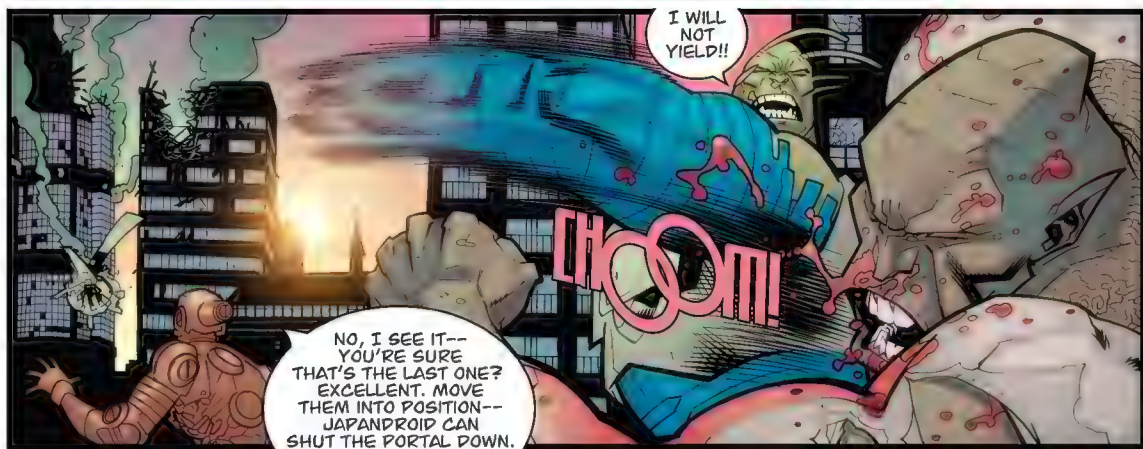
WE COULD BE RETURNING TO A DESTROYED PLANET, OR THE MIDDLE OF A BATTLE. IT'S ONLY BEEN A MATTER OF MONTHS, BUT WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WE COULD BE RETURNING TO. WE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING.

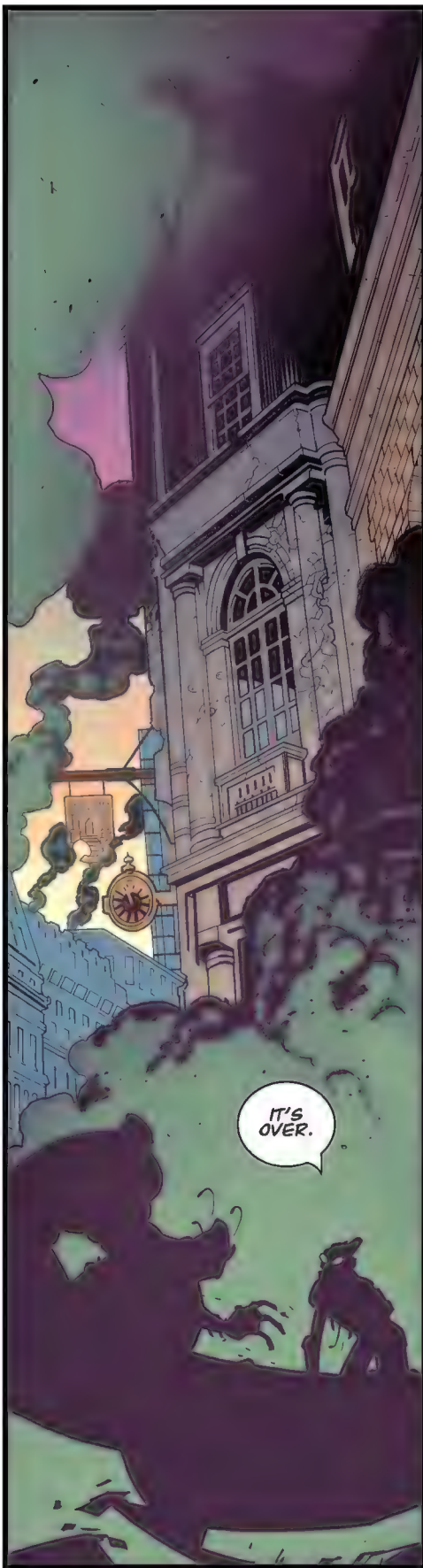


WHAT HAVE WE MISSED?









IT'S OVER.



THAT'S IT! YOU'VE CAUSED ENOUGH DAMAGE. I HOPE YOU'RE PROUD OF YOURSELF. WHAT A GREAT LEADER YOU TURNED OUT TO BE.

YOU'RE AN EMBARRASSMENT.



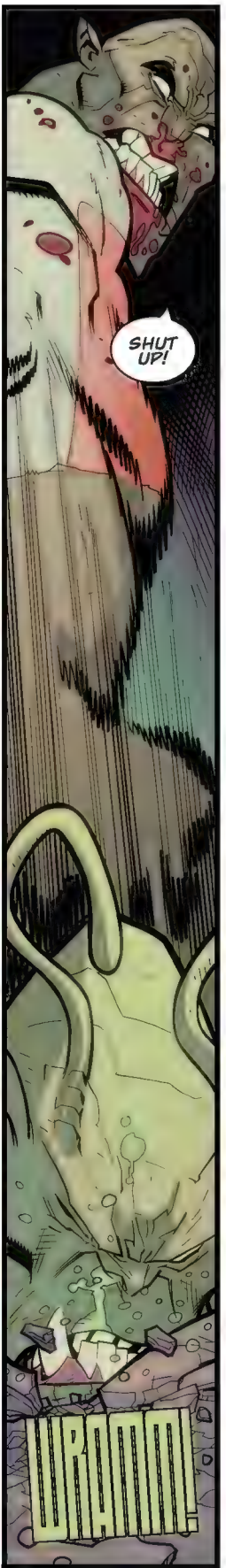
NO! IT'S NOT OVER-- IT CAN'T BE! NOT NOW! NOT LIKE THIS!

YOU DON'T GET TO WIN! NOT YOU-- NOT AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE!

I WON'T LET YOU WIN--

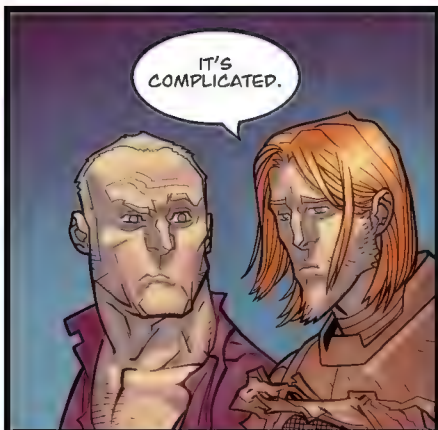


--YOU MONSTER!



SHUT UP!

WRATH!!



ZANDALE RANDOLPH'S
SWANK STUDIO APARTMENT.



OH, BOY--
THAT WAS A
TOUGH ONE.
FRACTURE
ISN'T TOO
BAD,
SO DON'T
WORRY.

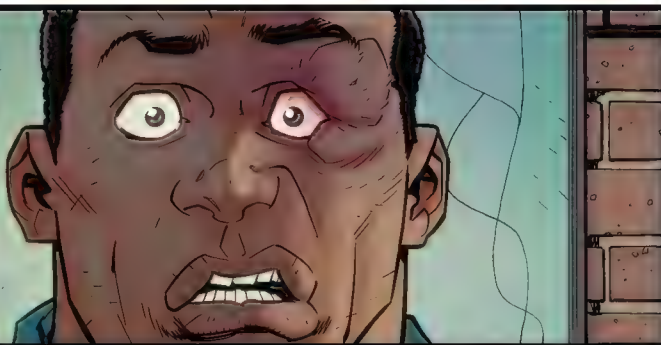
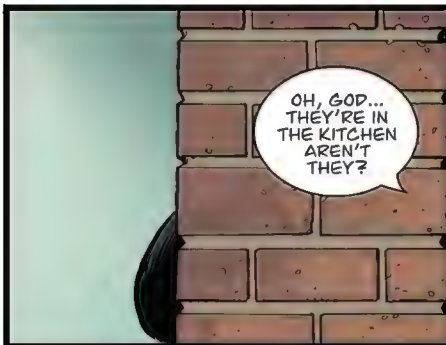


SHOULD BE HEALED IN A
WEEK OR SO, AND IT GIVES
US A GOOD REASON TO
AVOID MY PARENTS! IT'D
BE A PRETTY TOUGH SELL
THAT I BROKE MY ARM
WHILE SETTING UP
FOR A GALLERY
SHOW--

ZANDALE, HONEY--
YOU'RE RAMBLING
NONSENSE--HON,
PLEASE--WHAT
ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT?!



OH, GOD...
THEY'RE IN
THE KITCHEN
AREN'T
THEY?

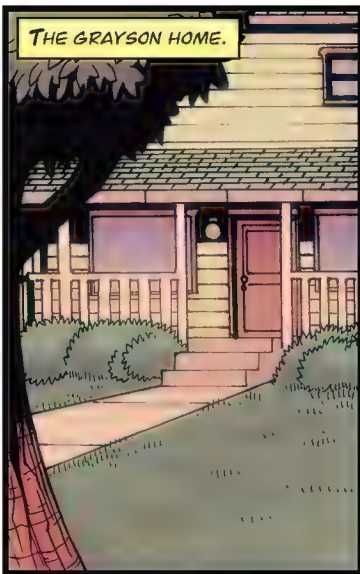


I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.
YOUR BROTHER
WAS FIGHTING
THOSE ALIENS...
NOT YOU. HOW
COULD YOU
BREAK
YOUR--



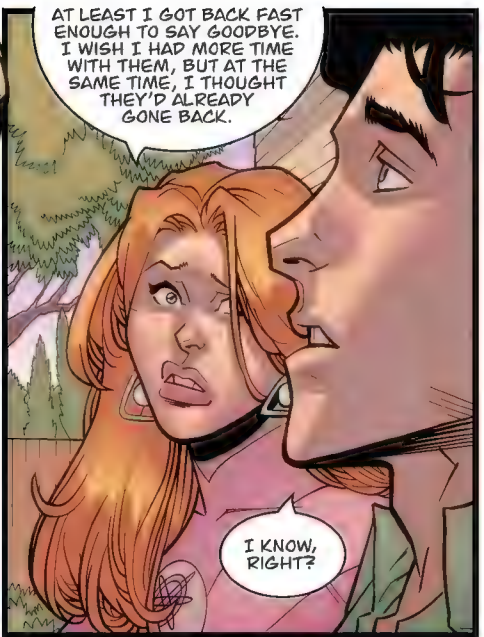
OH,
BOY...





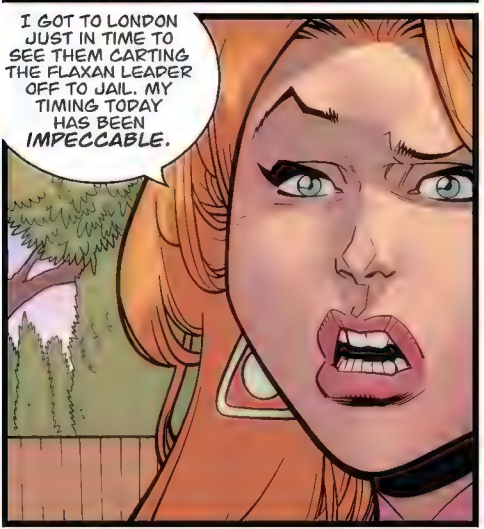




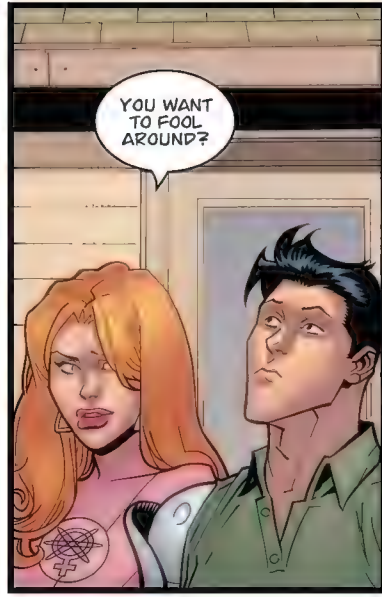
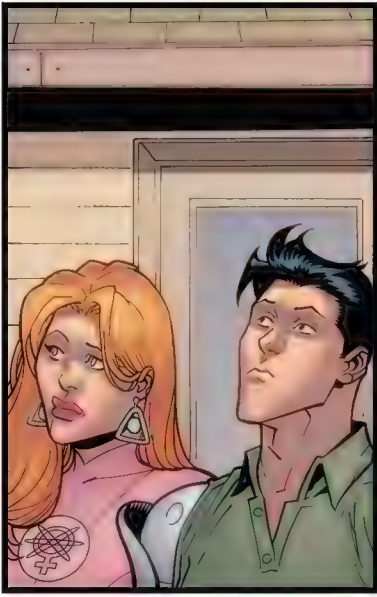


AT LEAST I GOT BACK FAST ENOUGH TO SAY GOODBYE. I WISH I HAD MORE TIME WITH THEM, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, I THOUGHT THEY'D ALREADY GONE BACK.

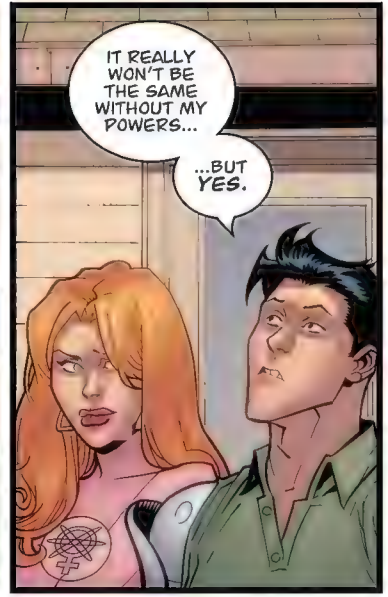
I KNOW, RIGHT?



I GOT TO LONDON JUST IN TIME TO SEE THEM CARTING THE FLAXAN LEADER OFF TO JAIL. MY TIMING TODAY HAS BEEN IMPECCABLE.

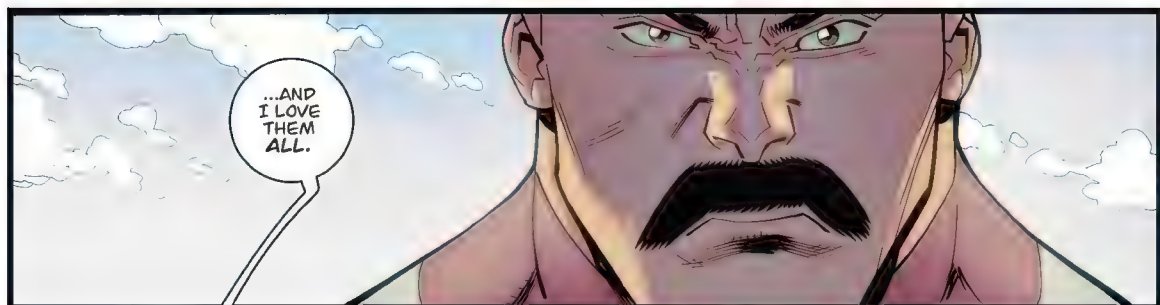
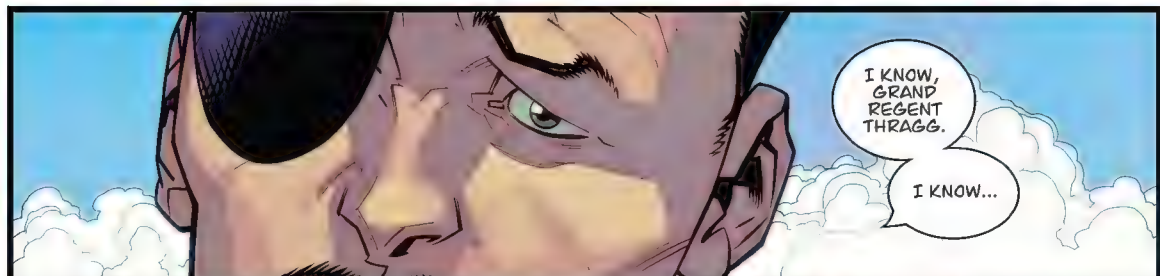


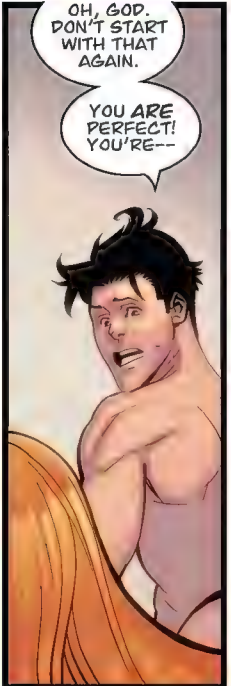
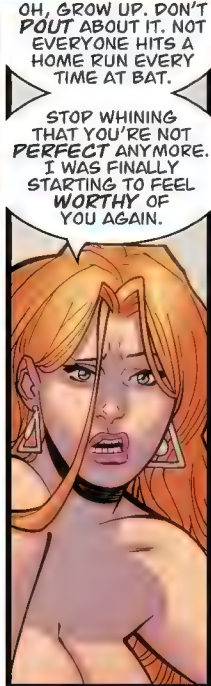
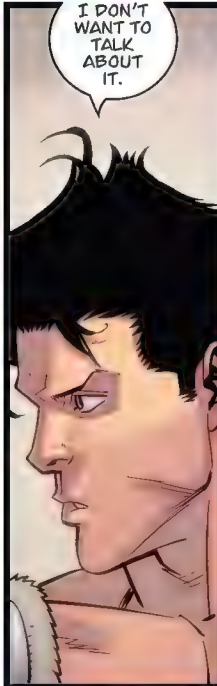
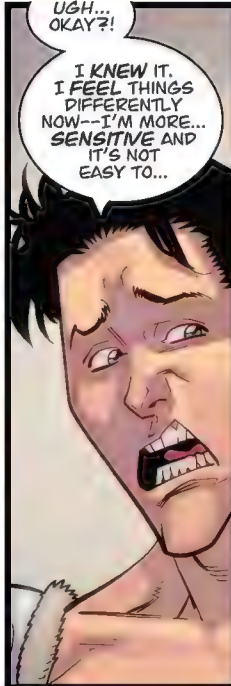
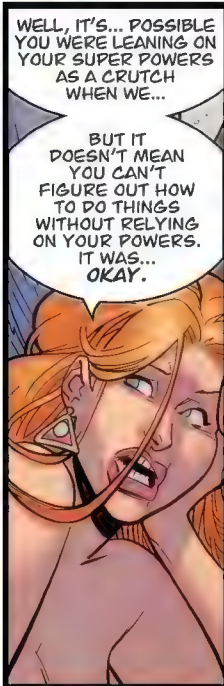
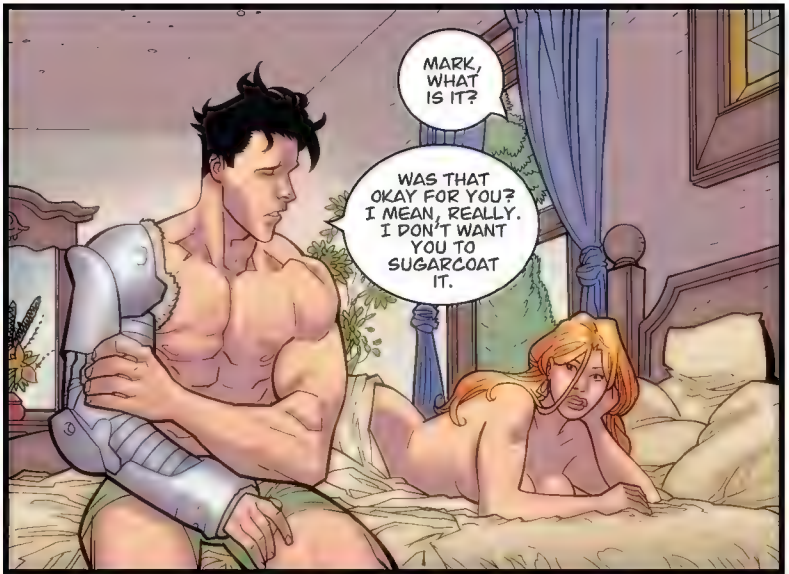
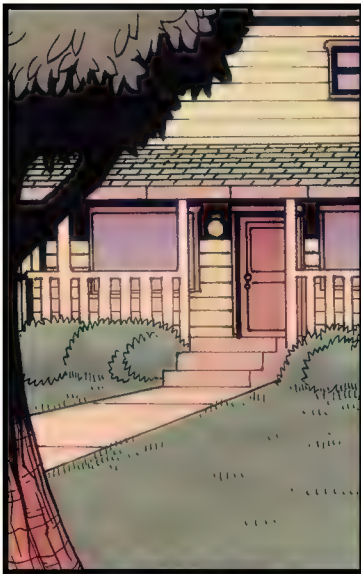
YOU WANT TO FOOL AROUND?

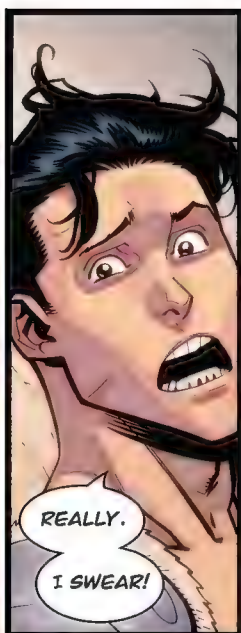
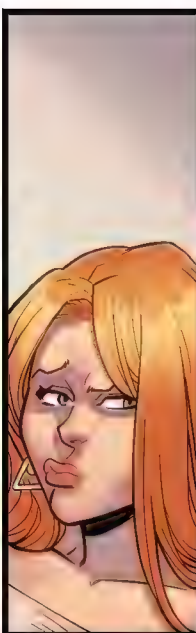
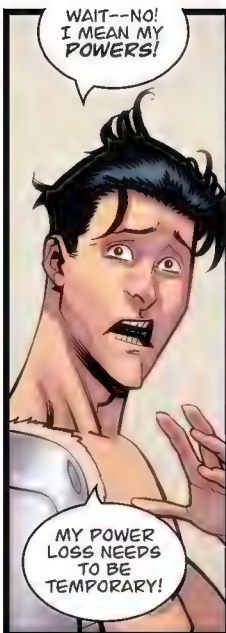
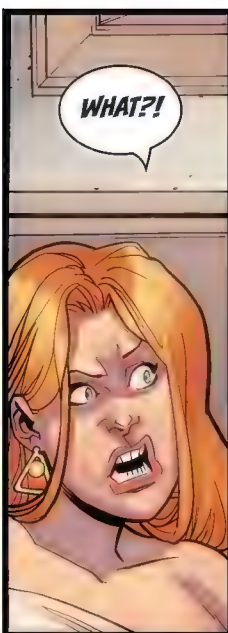
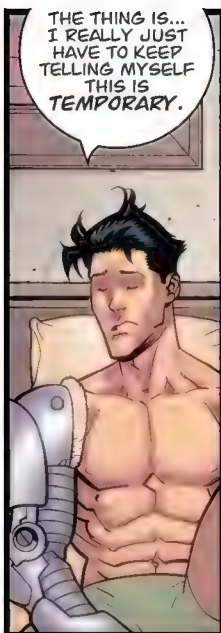


IT REALLY WON'T BE THE SAME WITHOUT MY POWERS...

...BUT YES.







"I'VE GOT NO IDEA
WHAT HE COULD
BE WORKING ON."



DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON,
THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF
THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY.

UNITED STATES
PENTAGON

Parking in Rear



I KNEW YOUR
MOTHER ONLY
BRIEFLY. I CARED
FOR HER, BUT WE
WERE NOT...
MEANT TO BE
TOGETHER.

I NEVER
KNEW YOU--
THAT WE'D--I
DIDN'T EVEN THINK
IT COULD BE
POSSIBLE FOR
MY MONSTER
FORM TO...

IF I'D
KNOWN YOU
EXISTED, I
WOULD NEVER
HAVE LEFT...
I WOULD
HAVE...

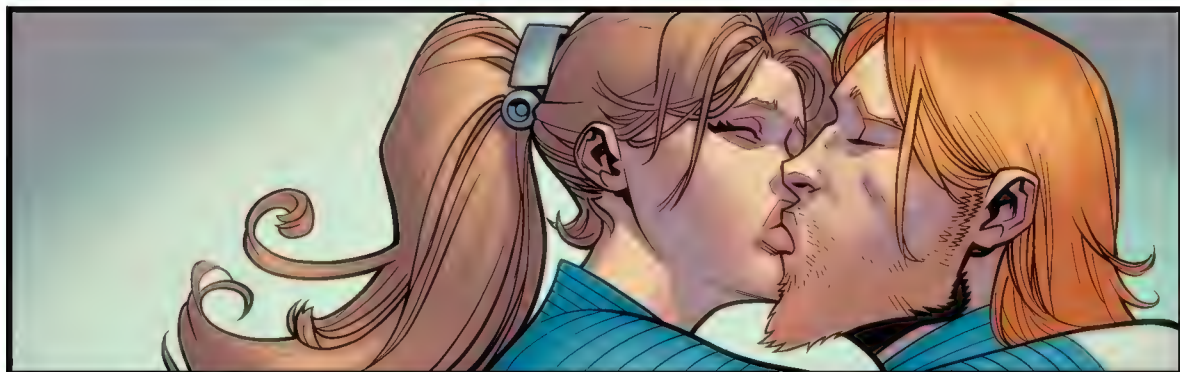
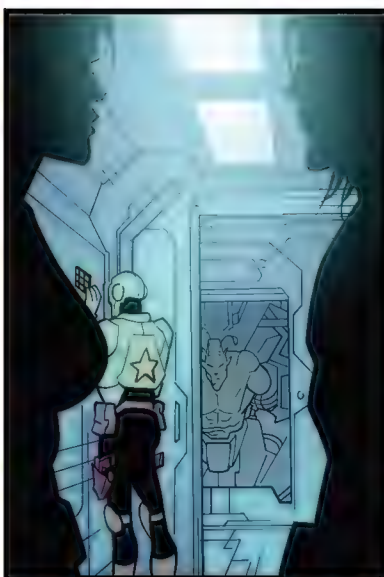
I HAVE
NOTHING
TO SAY
TO YOU.

LEAVE
ME.

WE
SHOULD
GO.

THANKS
FOR DOING
THIS,
REX.

I DON'T
THINK I COULD
HAVE GOTTEN
THROUGH
THIS ALONE.



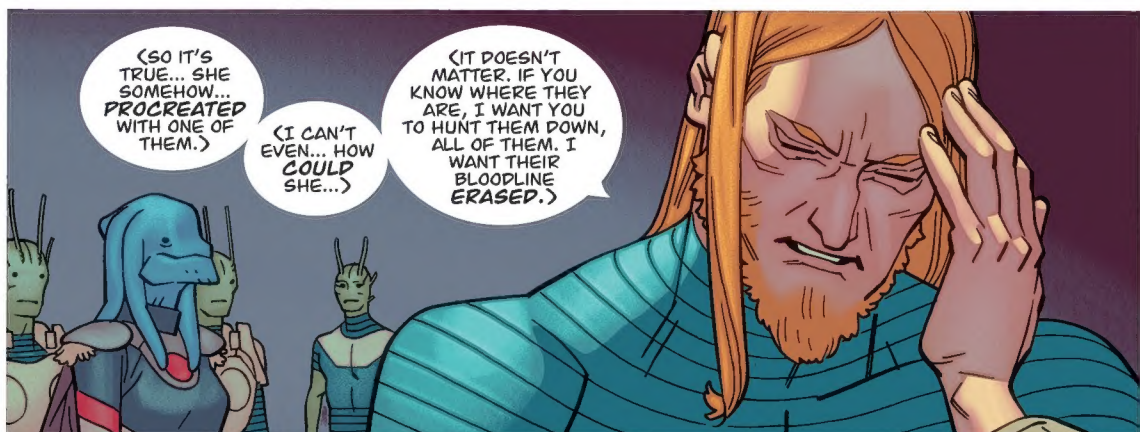


I THINK IT BEST WE SAY
WE WERE ONLY GONE FOR
AS LONG AS IT APPEARS
WE'VE AGED...
SO TWELVE
YEARS.

TELLING
EVERYONE
THE TRUTH
WOULD OPEN
US UP TO
TOO MANY
QUESTIONS,
AND--

(WE HAVE
LOCATED THE
ZAXAL REBEL
LEADERS, SIRE.
IT APPEARS THE
FEMALE IS
WITH CHILD.)

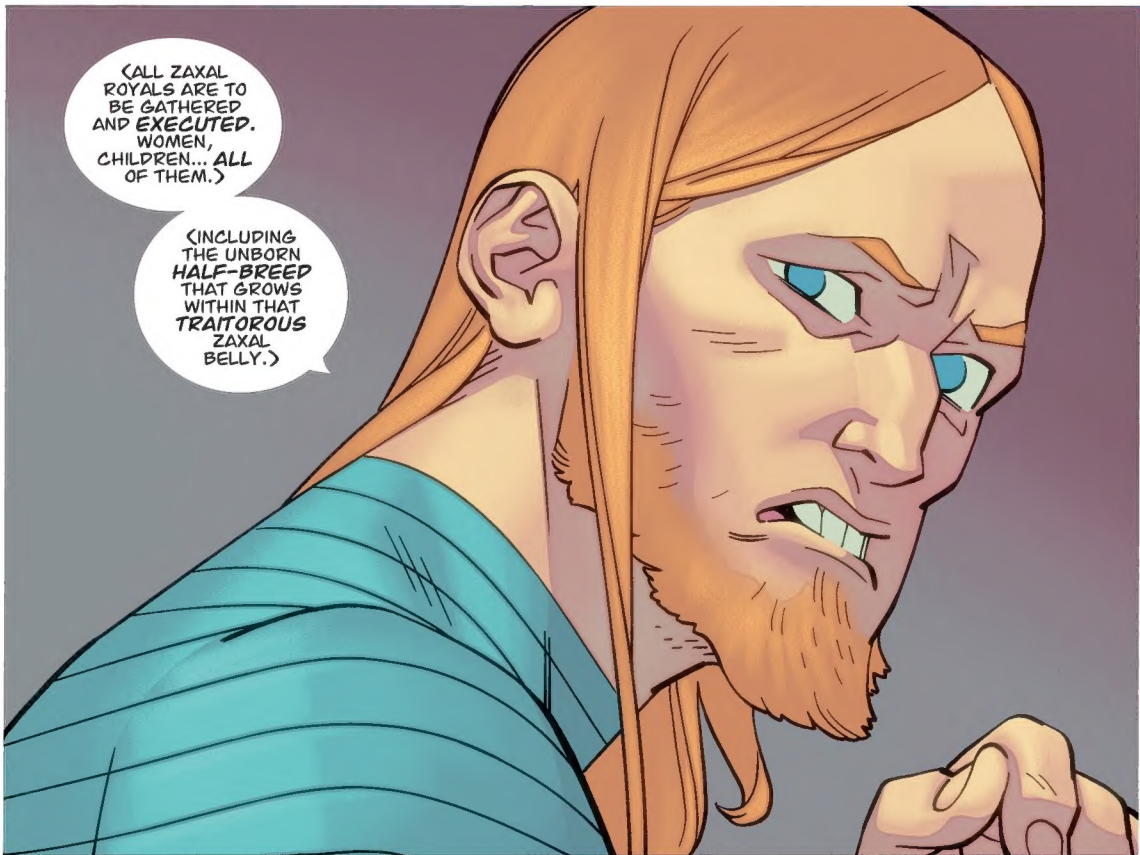
AMANDA,
PLEASE
EXCUSE ME FOR
A MOMENT.



(SO IT'S
TRUE... SHE
SOMEHOW...
PROCREATED
WITH ONE OF
THEM.)

(I CAN'T
EVEN... HOW
COULD
SHE...)

(IT DOESN'T
MATTER. IF YOU
KNOW WHERE THEY
ARE, I WANT YOU
TO HUNT THEM DOWN,
ALL OF THEM. I
WANT THEIR
BLOODLINE
ERASED.)



(ALL ZAXAL
ROYALS ARE TO
BE GATHERED
AND **EXECUTED.**
WOMEN,
CHILDREN... **ALL**
OF THEM.)

(INCLUDING
THE UNBORN
HALF-BREED
THAT GROWS
WITHIN THAT
TRAITOROUS
ZAXAL
BELLY.)





COLLECTS ISSUES 48-96 OF THE EISNER NOMINATED SERIES

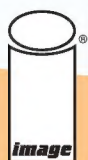
PLUS INVINCIBLE RETURNS 1 & ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN 11



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Ever since Mark Grayson got superpowers, life has never been the same. As Invincible, he's fought the universe's most dangerous villains, graduated high school, got a girlfriend (two of them!)... and his father, the world's greatest superhero Omni-Man, revealed himself to be an alien conqueror bent on taking over Earth. Since then, Invincible's been working for the Global Defense Agency, fighting their fights and saving the world in their name. Until now.

Invincible can no longer follow their orders unquestioned. Now he finds himself up against the very organization he's been working for! And war looms on the horizon...



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